Diary
1926

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1926.

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1926

Monday
8th February

Just back from Rodmell – to me again the work opening. And I worked explain why I've left a month slip perhaps. First, I think, the German measles or influenza: next Vita: then, disinclination for any fiction, so that I never made a book till last week. But undoubtedly this diary is established, & sometimes look back & wonder what on earth will be the fate of it. It is to serve the purpose of my memory. At 60 I am to sit down – write my life. As rough material for that masterpiece – & knowing the caprice of my own brain as record reader for I never know what will take my fancy then, I hear record that I come in to find the following letters waiting me. 1. Ottoline; on that wonderful crazy Oxford Ill. She is doing a cure. 2. A long letter of hypothetical flattery from Mme Sitwell who is translating Jacob's Room. 3. a Card, showing me her Character in an unfavourable light from Mrs Ethel Rye who once met me in an omnibus & wishes to take a mask & ~~cast~~ of my head; 4 a letter from Harcourt Brace enclosing cheque from the Forum for O. B. Ill. 5. a letter asking me to become one of the Committee of the English Association; 6: a cutting on Hogarth Essays from the Dial: 7. a note from Clive asking me to dine to meet his brother. I think this makes me out rather specially unfortunate. This 3 days post. I am rather tired, a little tired, from having thought too much about to the Lighthouse. Never never have I written so easily, imagined so properly. Murry says my works want be read in 10 years time – Well, I thought I'd get a new edition of Voy. from Harcourt Brace – this was published 11 years ago.

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Here is the usual dow bell

23rd Feb

& I think Gwen came in, & I was rather sudden & wretched feeling that I had nothing to give her, & the everything to ask. As I foretold, she is enmeshed in a net of fire: that is the truth: loves not; the fiery net of — who was it? — that was scorched to death: & hers is more painful than his, & more enduring. Yet how seldom one sympathizes whatever one knows! Her net lies on me; but it does not burn me. And I do little futile kindnesses to her, which are little good to anybody: & I don't do them. & I feel compunctious of all this. I have little appetite to write, being fagged 1. because Nelly won't make marmalade; 2. because a certain function impends; 3. because I can't go, in deference to L's wish, to Mortimer's farewell party; 4 because Wardie asked me to tea, & I did not go; 5: because — the last because I cannot now remember — a vague dissatisfaction: spring & funerals; yellow heads & white blossoms; beautiful black yellow pointed squares — & so on. Vita is a dumb letter writer, & I miss her. I miss the glow & the flattery & the festival. I miss her. I suppose, not very intimately. Nevertheless, I do miss her, & wish she were merry 10 hrs; & then I don't wish it: for I have such a razor edge to my habitude that seeing people often disports me of seeing them.

I am blown like an old flag by my novel. This one is to the Lighthouse. I think it is worth saying for my own interest that at last at last after that hatter Jacob's Room. That agony — all agony but the end, Mrs Dalloway. I am now working on fast freely as I have written in the whole going life: more

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10 - 20 times more so - than any novel yet. I think that it
the proof that I was on the right path; & that what
fruit hangs on my soul is to be reached then -
Cinquecento. I now invent therein that fertility &
fluency are the things: I used to plead for
a kind of close, terse, effort. Instead this goes on all
the morning: & I have the devil's own work not to be
flogging my brain all the afternoon. I live entirely in it.
& come to the surface rather obtusely & am often
unable to think what to say when we walk round the
Square, what is bad I know. Perhaps it may be a good
sign for the book though. Of course it is largely known to me:
but all my books have been that. ~~This~~ That, that, that
I can think everything off now: a "everything" is rather a
crowd & weight & confusion in the mind.

Then I have seen Lytton: seen Eddy: Mary: I forget:
I have been discreet in my society, & enjoyed it. Perhaps
I am again brisking, after my lethargy. The
publishing season is about to begin. Nina says
Why don't you give it up? I say, because I enjoy it.
Then I wonder, but do I? What about Rome -
Sicily? And Manny Sanders is not worth the
grind. Am I a fanatical enthusiast for
work like my father? I think I have a
strain of that, but I don't relish it. Tonight
Francis Birrell & Rose Macaulay dine with me.
To celebrate the occasion, I have bought a toast
rack & a bedspread, which covers that atrocious
chest of drawers which has worried me these 2 years.
I am now so pleased with the colour that I go out -
look at it.

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Wed 24th Feb.

To continue, the second day running which is a rarity. They came last night, Francis & Rose Macaulay – I dare say I shall be calling her Rose one of these days. Francis I didn't much relish meeting her: my fears of worries gave me little peace: given ringing up: I not covered; She staying off: I repentant; ringing up again: Then Rose – too chattery chattery at first so off: lean as a rake, wispy, & frittered. Some flowing smartness & faint gilt flowing flittery literary about her: but then was partly nervous, I think: & she felt as alien & observant doubtless. Stuffed in the middle of dinner the lights went out: only a few candles in sconces to be had. & I left her & Francis alone in the dark to talk. After all, she had no humbug about her; is exactly on a par as far as conventions go. I imagine: only frosted & rather cheaply gilt superficially with all that being asked to speak at dinner, to give openings to newspapers, & so on., lunching at the League of Nations; dining with Lord Williams, meeting Jack Squire who has grown whiskers & looks like a verge.

Let me see, there's some feature of sympathy between Chiswick & Bloomsbury. I think, she said. So was defined Bloomsbury. Her part is to stick up for common sense she said. I elaborated her being Cambridge. She is writing an article for an American paper on London after the War. There isn't anything that one distrusts in her. Why should she take the field so unnecessarily? But

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I fancy our leading lady novelists all do as they are asked about this, & I am not quite one of them. I saw my own position, a good deal lowered & diminished, & this is part of the value of seeing new people — still more of going to people's houses. One is, if anything, minimised: here in the Eternal Bloomsbury, one is apt, without realising it, to expand.

Then Gwen came. I like Frances. I like her laughter; & her random energy. He is a Victorian. Indeed we talked a lot, when L. was in the basement with the electrician, of father, who, said Rachel, dominates the 20th Century. "He made it possible for me to have a decent life" he said. "He pulled down the whole edifice, & never knew what he was doing. He never realised that if God went, morality must follow. A remarkable man; for though he would not believe in God, he was stricter than those who did.

"He loved lamentation" said L. coming up. R. M. said her parents called him always "poor Leslie Stephen" because he had lost his faith. Also they said he was very gentle & charming. Gwen said her father & mother had a great respect for him. They had a very romantic feeling for my mother. Because she was so beautiful, I said, proud that R. M. should know this; a fact rather queer, to think how much of this there is in To the Lighthouse. & how all these people will read it & recognise parts Leslie Stephen & beautiful Mrs. Stephen in it.

Then we talked of knowing people. R. M. said the always knew why she liked people. Gwen

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being perhaps tired, was a little mystical; or perhaps she has acquired views which are yet hardly articulate. Bishop Leonard thought her 'almost inspired'. They got talking about whether one knew more about pictures or books. R.H. showed up rather well in argument, & maintained that a book is a subjective thing; the artist authority in literature. But he'll know about painting as this a more technical art. Then the rest (this makes me think she will wish to be called Rose) how she had dreamt she was staying with us in a cottage in Surrey, a 15th Century home, full of old beams & candle lt. In some light the has the beautiful eyes of all undistinguished women when: the refinement, the charm of art; the pathetic; & humbleness. This her voice & manner that make one sad.

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Sat
Feb.
27th

I think I shall initiate a new convention for this book – beginning each day on a new page – my habit in writing serious literature. Certainly. I have room to waste a little paper in this year's book. As for the soul: why did I say I would leave it out? I forget. And the truth is, one can't write directly about the soul. Looked at, it vanishes: but look at the ceiling, at fingers, at the cheaper beasts in the Zoo which are exposed to weather in Regent's Park, & the soul slips in. It shifted in this afternoon – I was write that I said, staring at the bison: answering L: absent mindedly: but what was I going to write?

Mr. Webb's book has made me think a little what I owed day of my own life. I read some of 1923 this morning, being headachy again, & taking a delicious draught of silence. But then there were causes in her life: prayer: principle. None in mine. Great adaptability & search after something. Great content – almost always enjoying what I'm at but with constant change of mood. I don't think I'm ever bored. Sometimes a little stale: but I have a power of recovery – what I have tested; & am now testing for the 50th time. I have to husband my head still very carefully: but then, as I said to Leonard today, I enjoy Epicurean ways of society: sipping & then shuttering my eyes to taste. I enjoy almost everything. Yet I have some restless searcher in me. Why is there not a discovery in life? Something one can lay hand on & say "This is it?" My depression is a lazy & tired feeling – I'm working: but that's not it – that's not it. What is it? And shall I die before I find it? Then (as I was walking through Russell Sq. last night) I see the mountains in the sky: the great clouds: & the moon which is seen over Persia: I have a

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a great & astonishing sense of something there which is 'it' — It is not exactly beauty that I mean. It is that the thing is intensely enough: satisfactory: achieved. A sense grey-green strangeness, walking on the earth is there too: of the infinite oddity of the human position: bobbing along Russell Sq. with the moon up there, & those mountain clouds. Who am I, what am I, — do on: these questions are always floating about in me: — then I bump against some hard fact — a letter, a page, & come to them again with a great sense of freshness. And so it goes on. But, on this floating which is true, I think, I do fairly frequently come upon this 'it'; & then feel quite at rest.

Is that what I meant to say? Not in the least. I was thinking about my own character, not about the universe. Oh & about Dorothy again; dining with Lord Rosmen at Chris made me think that. How, at a certain moment, I see through what I'm saying: detest myself; & wish for the other side of the moon: reading alone, that is. How many phases one goes through between the pomp & the sweat! I want, partly as a writer, to found my impressions on something firmer. I said to Lord B. All you must do in working is to flout off the contents of your mind. Clive Raymond laughed & said That's exactly what I can do anyhow. And I don't want that to be all. Nor is it. There's a good deal of shaping & composing in my book. However — the main idea of them is that, then: & I don't like it.

Lord B. was stockish, resolute, quick witted: analysed his own instability. His father was a Sea Captain; wished him not on any account to be a long haired artist: his mother used to say "My little boy plays so nicely — you should hear him play" but she minded him not

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hunting & riding. So, he said, he was inhibited as a musician. His talent clung (I think he said) like a creeper to the edge of a cliff. One day he wrote two marches for Jim. Stravinsky saw them, thought them good, & they were published. So he was accepted as a serious musician, without any 4 lessons from Tovey in counterpoint. He had an astonishing facility. He could write things that sounded ok right. Suddenly, last year, at his peak in it went. He met a painter, asked him how you paint: bought 'hogsheads' — (meant hogs bristles) & canvas & copied an Italian picture, brilliantly, commentately, says Clive. Has the same facility there: but it will come to nothing he said, like the other.

What did we talk about? Tom & the bitwelles; Eddie Marsh & Lady Colefax. & I felt one cd. go on keeping these things for ever, & they mean nothing. Sure enough, he asked me to dine: & now I say I have a headache & can't.

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W.O.
3rd March.

And I did have a bit of a headache – yes; all this time is rather weathering headaches. Nailing a flag to a mast in a gale, I have just compared ~~described~~ writing a novel in London to that in a letter to Vita. The flow is off my visit to Herbert & Freda at Wokham: a very memorable day. From their window you look down on the top of old Mr. Watkins' bald head shuffling on the Thames. You look at two twisted stakes in the river which I look for Cranes; & across Marlow to some hills. They motored us up into the hills & it was oddly strangely still & bright & empty & full of earthbound flowers. We saw a Queen Anne house called Ipsden; so high & remote, with tiny box doors; & broad alleys: enormous windows, a woman. Well; no one gets more pleasure from these sights than I do; only the wave of pleasure leaves some regret – ah this beauty going – going – going: & I in Tavistock Sq^re not seeing it.

And spiritually it was very interesting. I thought I had found the real human being – something so simple & fitted into surrounding as to be almost unreflective, in Freda. She is nearer humanity than I am: gets her way into the heart yet, as I cannot. Her thighs are thick with honey. But the impediment is dying, as they do, under others – how I lost my little mother's heart brooch bought a 16/ hat which I do not like. & went to tea at Ethel's Thursday in what then? My own lack of beauty depresses me today. But how far does the old convention about 'beauty' bear looking into? Think of the people I have known. Are they beautiful? This problem I have unsolved.

Raymond gave a fancy dress party on Sunday night I was tossed with a sleeping draught; & was dozing off, as the carriages arrived at no. 6. Still I enjoyed them; & thought, when Raymond telephoned about the loss of Old Longworth which I gave him & said how lovely & lucky had worked, that I had mined the greatest right of a lesson. Happily, Julian comes to tea, & he says he hears

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it was a terrible sticky dull hardly, with not room to turn round in, which greatly pleases me. Luca, Peter, I should call him, came, from friendship; which friendship, as I suppose, was gently stimulated by my praise of his novel. He is a tony very little austere priest: so whole, & sane, & simple throughout one can't help respecting him, though when it comes to book, we differ a good. He says Tom &c: have thrown intellect to the winds; given up the ghost: he says Hoxeman & Dela Mare are the real hosts. I say hostry is defunct; & Tom &c. anyhow try to animate it. The Sitwells, he says, adventure. They are aristocrats, I say, thinking criticism upstart impertinence on the part of shopkeep. No merit in their work, say he, he says. But what about their drawing room singer, Dela Mare, I ask. The most charming genius. Granted. Granted, on Peter's side, that he has no coherency whatever — is always darting after strange minutiae — goldfish in bowls, I say. Well, but we can't all be great philosophical hosts, he says. Anyhow Tony aint a drawing room singer, I say. Tom has been down lecturing, & not creating a good impression at Cambridge, I fancy. He tells the young men, in private, how they cook fish in Paris: his damned self consciousness, again, I suppose. But Peter is, to my mind, too entire in his judgments: founded on book learning & prettiness into the bargain: He has no ascendency of them: he is not, & never will be, a personage: which is the one thing needful in criticism, or writing of any sort, I think; for we're all as wrong as wrong can be. But Character is the thing.

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Tuesday
March 9th

Then I was at two parties: Ethel's tea: Mercy's dinner. Ethel was a shabby frizzly frying pan appearance. I chattering in front of the footlights.

Well said Olt, how are you? ~~Well~~ you look wonderfully well; as if you had never had an illness in your life.

(Now what does she say that for? to get pity for herself.

Pure Enough.

I can't say I'm any better.

But she is all dressed like a girl of 18: tomato coloured Georgette & fur.

Ethel says, tittering

What a nice hat.

I'm all windblown in my old felt, come through the snow, with Wadie.

Well, I say lingerly, I'll see this through anyhow. take my seat as on a throne, & proceed first to letter young Leigh Ashton: Reid wrote that Times leader this morning (quoting me & Joya as examples of good prose respecting death of Queen Victoria)

I should so much like to know if you think its well written - such a charming man.

Then dressing: Ethel: Olt & Lew: Percy Lubbock.

Are the Russians more passionate than we are?

No: I say: I have all the passion: asked to define a dramatic scene: had learned says "I think the worse as you for ever" when I accept Olt's invitation.

Suddenly I remember Mrs Olt's invitation.

If any Mr Lubbock had a daughter he would have scenes - this is sheer ~~an~~ egotistical cruelty on Olt's part: so home, holding Wadie by the

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by the arm; talking about his fellowship, to be announced on Saturday.
(But Pete thinks he won't get it)
& abusing Chelsea, & Oxford: & saying how unpopular I made myself.
As for Mary's beauty, there, save for the usual rhyme about
powder & paint, shoes & stockings, I was happy, owing to the
supremacy of literature. That keeps us sweet & fair, Jesse Morse -
one I mean.

He has a pink foolish face; blue eyes like hard marbles; a
crest of mouse hair; little & unmuscular hands; stooping
shoulders; a high stomach; neat, prosperous well brushed clothes;
& perfect manners, as I consider them. That is today he
speaks without fear or dominance; accepting me on my
merits; every one on their merits. Still in spite of age
unbowed, unbreaken, lively, shrewd. As for Hardy &
Henry James though, what shall one say?

& I am a fairly modest man; but I admit I think
Esther Waters a better book than Tess.

But what is there to be said for that man? He cannot
write - He cannot tell a story. The whole art of
fiction consists in telling a story. Now he makes a
woman confess - How does ~~it~~ he do it? In the
third person - a scene that should be moving, impressive.
Think how Tolstoi would have done it!

But, said Jack. War & Peace is the greatest novel in
the world. I remember the scene where Natasha
puts on a moustache, & Rostov ~~&~~ sees her for the
first time ~~& falls~~ as she is & falls in love with her

No my good friend, there is nothing very wonderful in
that - That is an ~~good fair~~ ordinary piece of observation.
But my good friend (to me - half hesitating to tell me this)

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what have you to say for Hardy? You cannot find anything to say. English fiction is the worst part of English literature – Compare it with the French – with the Russians. Henry James wrote some pretty little stories before he invented his jargon. But they were about rich people. You cannot write stories about rich people; because, I think he said, they have no instincts. But Henry James was enamoured of marble balustrades. ~~some~~ There was no passion in any of his people. And ~~Age~~ Anne Brontë was the greatest of the Brontës & Conrad could not write, & so on. But this is out of date.

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Sat
March
20 15

But what is to become of these diaries, I asked myself yesterday.
If I died, what would Leo make of them? He would be
disinclined to burn them; he could not publish them. Well,
he should make up a book from them, I think; a few form the
body. I daresay there is a little book in them: the
strokes & scratches were straightened out a little. God knows.
This is dictated by a slight melancholia, which comes
upon me sometimes now, & makes me think I am old: I am
ugly. I am repeating themselves: yet, as far as I know,
as a whole I am only now working out my mind.
Dining with Clive last night to meet Lord Ivor Spencer Churchill — an
elegant attenuated Greatheart, very smooth, very supple,
with the semi-transparent face of a flower, & the legs of
a gazelle, & the whole waistcoat a diamond button of
dandy, & all an Americans desire to understand
psycho-analysis — I thought of my own age. I made a
horrid faux pas early on: said I liked a lecture, which I did
not like, & found I was wrong. Now if I had followed
my instinct, as one should do, I should have been right. For
some extraordinary reason, this poisoned my evening, slightly.
The Lord analysed every thing very unencouragingly: he is a
clever boy. I was gently unpierced by masculine
cleverness, & their absolutely to toss balls swiftly & surely &
fix: no butter fingers: all clean catches. Adrian
Bishop came in; a muddy bulldog; & then I went.
Clive with a discrimination which was affectionate, but not
just, apologized, thinking I had not talked enough for my
pleasure; whereas I had said the wrong thing, & been
depressed over that. Otherwise the evening
amused me, & I wanted, like a child, to stay & argue.
True, the argument was paying my tennis — how

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if Einstein is true, we shall be able to foretell our own lives. Fortune tellers can now read one's mind exactly as reading is. Lord Ivor, who, by the bye, had read neither Henry James nor V.W., is about 23, & came to the pen the money, obediently, to buy my complete works. No intellectual would have done that. They are exclusively amusing to have their works — these aristocrats; witness Lord Berners the other night, sending out for Peacock, on my recommendation.

Otherwise, we had Bea Howe to dinner; & went to Phillips on a hot still day of the usual loveliness, & saw the place, the horses, & the pepper box tower of Widdington, & I liked the immense greenness & unclouddedness of Bab; but says Eddy who came to tea on Sunday, this is "I assure you" all my imagination: ~~the~~ the would be very dull if you knew how she knows dozens of people who is not dull. Eddy says according to Eddy.

Then there was Sybil Colefax: she comes to heel promptly: yes, I want to there; she may have a little cheap tea here, which she does, gratefully. she has done American work the usual dashing, joyless efficiency: could not analyse, merely report. Charlie Chaplin made a mixture of rubbly & commonness: but why? No instance of rubbly available, so I infer that he picked this up Leland Hand, perhaps from Time Howard, perhaps from Coolidge, or from Douglas Fairbanks or from the Italian boy who drove the car. Like a good housewife, which she is, she is making Peter begin life hard, cooking his breakfast, down in Wall Street by 9. There is a strain of hard, serious, professionalism in her quite unmitigated by all the splendours of Eagle House.

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Wed.
March
24th

"I'm going to hand in my resignation this morning" said L. making the coffee.

To what? I asked. "The Nation"

And it is done: & we have six months only before us. I feel 10 years younger: the weight off our shoulders again – the world before us. I can't pretend to make much ado about this either way. It was a temporary makeshift job, amusing at first, then failing. & last night, after an argument of the usual kind about literary articles – Joan & so on with Maynard & Hubert L. came to the decision to resign now. There was no quarrel. Curiously enough, having tea with Nina, she had let me thinking the same thing. Phil Baker had said to her he thought L. the best living writer, & what a pity it was he spent so much time on the Nation & the Press. So there was I beginning, don't you think we might give them up! – when L. came in with his contribution to the question. It was dinner with Clive, so the discussion waited till this morning: was decided by 10: in the hands of the Chief by 11 – & now thank God no more Chief for either of us so long as we live I hope.

The situation appears to be that L. shall make £300: I £200 – & really I don't suppose we shall find it hard; & then the merely sparing no ties, no roots, no articles to produce, & all that, is worth a little more certain stretch, round it come to that. I'm amazed at my own sense of liberation. To expect everything every 3 or 4 years is my notion of a happy life. Always to be tacking to get into the eye of the wind. Now a prudent life is, as L. pointed

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not in the Square the opposite of this. We ought to work in the same place. But with £400 assured & no children, why institute a limited in order to enjoy a ~~[illegible]~~ limited safety? The next question will be, Nay, the Press. Shall we give that up too, & so be quit of everything? It's not such an easy question as to pleasing. I sometimes wish it. For, speaking selfishly, it has served my turn: given me a chance of working off my own brat, & now I doubt if Hermann & Cape would much intermeddle me. But then there's the Jam – which is considerable. The time will come, at this rate, when we have nothing in the world to resign: then, to get the effect of Change, one will have to accept. We say we will travel & see the world. Anyhow I make my usual prediction – we shall be richer this time next year without the Nation than with it.

I rather like feeling that I have to earn myself. I intensely dislike being in office, in any post of authority. I dislike being in public play. This of course is part of the reason why I like writing for the Press. But I prize freedom below a fetish like any other. These disjointed reflections I scribble on a dreary, sleepy day; ~~[illegible]~~ being absent, & reading Anna Karenina, to dine at a fish-house with Rose Macaulay – not a cheerful entertainment; but an experience perhaps.

Lydia came in to the room when L. was talking to Maynard this morning to show him her Zebra shoes, which cost £5.8.6. & they were really beyond, L. says. Also she narrows her a change like this destroys personality – dissipates the Elements

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Sat 29th March

to Catrinice — I dont know why I should really tell the story of the Station — it doesn't figure largely in our lives. But Leonard met Phil Baker who says he will get £300 as Lecturer of the School of Economics easily if he wants it. He came in that night & said this & then we went off on a blowing night to dine at Rose St's 'hothouse', as I so mistakenly called it. There were 10 second rate writers in second rate dress clothes, Lynds, Jonld, O'Donovan: no, I went in any theory of sympathetic humanity include Wolves. L. by the way was in his red brown tweed. Then the pellmell began: the old yard was scratched over by these baldheaded chickens. The truth was that we had no interests private: literature was our common ground, & though I talk literature with Desmond or Lytton by the hour, when it comes to picking up sparing with these active strenuous fools my forge rises. What d'you think of the Hawthornden prize? ~~Was~~ Why isn't Masefield as good as Chaucer, & Gherardi as good as Tchekov: but can I embark with Gerald Gould & such topics? He reads novels incessantly: got married 3 years ago, & prided himself on reading nothing but Tchekhov: knows all about a novel in the first chapter. Sylvias & Gerald & Roberts & Roses chimed & twittered round the table. A stout woman called Gould got steadily more & more purpled & tomato coloured: I said Holy Ghost? when Mr O'Donovan said the whole of the Court. Lodged in a low dose in Roses underground cheerful, dark, bare room I talked to a young cultivated man, who turned out to be Hinks, Roger, British Museum, mild

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aesthete, variety of Leigh Hunt; but thank God, not a second rate journalist. At the time I might say to myself thank God to be at sea that; out of the Nation; no longer brother in army with Rose, Robert & Sylvia. He is a thunderbolt set; so 'nice', 'kind', respectable, clever & in the swim.

Then over set at Nemes last night was hardly at his best: L. & Adrian silent & satirical; Old Hickert rather loathsome & yet; I driven to chatter, not well; but Henry of Donlan dait controlledst & order these parties; so home in a spasm of outraged vanity, & not that altogether, for I had worked heavily & fairly, & L. had not; & then he was off early this morning to Rodmell where Philosophy is in the throes of building a dams: so I had no time to increase my rose leaf: had to fly & work, to finish the rather long drawn out dinner scene, & was just striking oil when in comes Angus to tell me Eddy was on the phone: wanted I go to Romney Kodaker with him on Monday. I agreed — more, asked him to dinner. Then was all a whirl & flutter of doubts: detested the engagement; could not settle: suddenly shook my coat like a retriever; faced facts; sent Eddy a wire, & a letter "Can't come — detest engagement", & pondered where shall I spend the day? Decided on Greenwich, arrived there at 1; lunched; everything felt out of; smoked a cigarette on the pier promenade, saw the ships swinging up, one two, three, out of their haze; adored them: yes even the lavatory keeper little dog: saw the grey Wren buildings fronting the river; & then another great ship, grey & orange; with a woman walking on deck; & then

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to the hospital; first to the Museum where I saw Sir John Franklin's pen & spoons (a spoon asks a good deal of imagination to consecrate it — I plunged into my mind watching what it would do; & behold I felt almost burst into tears over the ~~x~~ coat Nelson wore at Trafalgar with the medals what he had with his hand when they carried him down, dying, lest the doctors might see it was him. There was too, his little fuzzy pigtail, golden greyish hair tied in black; & his long white stockings, one much stained, & his white breeches with the ~~fo~~ gold buckle, & his stock — all exquisite. Further they must have undone & taken off as he lay dying. Kiss me Hardy &c — Anchor, anchor, — I read it all when I came in, & cried. Swear I was there on the Victory — So the Charm worked in that case. Then it was raining a little, but I went into the Park, which is all prominence & radiating path: then back in time for a bus, & so to tea. Molly came, a warm faithful bear, whom I am really fond getting from the steady accumulation of my desire to see her there last 3 or 4 weeks, culminating in my asking her to come, as I do rarely ask anyone to come. Sapan came, with his great grandfather's diary, which it pleases him I should like, & talk like him; & then undoing a bed. I think my rose leaf is now uncrumpled. Certainly I shall remember the chips coming up (here tomorrow, but I won't see him — Solitude is my bride, & she is adulterated by Alice & Mary to night) & Nelson's coat long ago I have forgotten how jolly & uncomfortable I was at Nevas on Friday.

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Friday
April 9th

Life has been very good to the Leaf. I should say it has been perfect. Why then all this pother about life? It can produce old Walter, bubbling & chubby; a old Lotta, stately & content; a little Kitty, as good & nice as can be; a handsome Charles, as loving & affectionate. Plunge deep into Walter's life & it's all round & satisfactory. He's now kissing him & saying "Bless you father" He sinks back chuckling in his armchair. He chooses a mallaroon. He tells a story. Lotta sits, in her black velvet dress. Only I am exiled from this profound natural happiness. That is what I always feel, or often feel now – natural happiness is what I lack, in profusion. Their intense happiness – not that. It's therefore what I most envy: geniality & family love & being on the rails of human life. Indeed, gaffsatism apart, this is a very satisfactory form of existence. And it exists for thousands of people all the time. Why have we none yet got it, in that measure? Old & young agreeing to live together: & being normal; & clever enough of course; yet not stinted or self-centred in emotion. Much of this may be the generalised & harmonious view which one gets of unknown people as a whole. I might not think it if I saw more of them. Writers do not live like that perhaps. But it's useless fluttering away the impression which is so strong. Also I keep thinking "They pity me – They wonder what I find in life." Then I sink a little silent & rouse myself to talk to Kitty. Also I know that nothing Leonard or I have done – not our books or the Press or anything means anything to Lotta & Walter & Charles & very little to Kitty. Charles has his motor at the door. They are perfectly happy motoring off to Berkhamstead, which will take an hour, so they are among the loaves even now. A fine spring night. & so on.

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Sunday April 11th

Cannot read Mrs Webb because at any moment S. Tomlin may ring the bell. Also I wanted to go on about the deaf. I have almost forgotten the impression they made on me. I have whipped myself round in my own personality again. How does it come about – these sudden intense changes of view? Perhaps my life, working away in my own way, is unusually cautious: very vivid to me: & then, going to sea with the deaf destroys it more completely than other peoples lives balance my life is trying to obey "This is life – the only life"

Wallin cracks a joke, I

~~Wallin cracks a joke~~: Bottlebee I enters a completely world of its own; where realizes that this is questioning whether I get a not: & so get bowled over. Violent as they are, these impressions go quickly, leaving a sediment giving what I shall discuss with L. perhaps when we go to Iverne Minster. About natural happiness: how it is destroyed by our way of life.

Mrs Webb Life makes me compare Aunt with mine. The difference is that she is trying to relate all her experiences to ~~a harm~~ harmony. She is very rational & coherent. She has always thought about her life & the meaning of the world: indeed, she begins this at the age of 4. She has studied herself as a phenomenon. Then her autobiography is part of the history of the 19th Century. She is the product of science & the lack of faith in God; she was affected by the Time Spirit. Anyhow she ~~is~~ ~~Carlyle~~ believes this to be so; & makes herself fit in very persuasively & to my mind ~~with~~ ~~all her~~ the very interestingly. She takes a great stream of thought unlike that self conscious professor/ she is much more interested in facts & truth than in what ~~they~~ will shock people & what a professor ought not to say. Tomlin does not seem to be coming. & L. is at Haines, so I will try a little reading

Walter Raleigh

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18th April

This is not written very seriously. – obviously not – to try a pen, I think. And this now April 30th, the last of a wet windy month, & letting the sudden opening of the doors at Easter, & the summer displayed flaunting, as it always is, I suppose; only cloud hidden. I have not said anything about Iverne Manor now it would amuse me to see what I remember of it by. Cranbourne Chase: the stunted aboriginal forest trees, flattened, not grouped in cultivation; anemones, bluebells, violets, all pale, sprinkled about, without colour, livid, for the sun hardly shone. Then Blackmore Vale; a vast air dome & the fields dropped to the bottom: the sun striking, there, there; a bunch of rain falling like a veil streaming from the sky, there & there; & the downs rising, very strongly scarped (if that is the word) so that they were edged & edged; then an inscription in a church "sought peace & ensued it", & the question, who wrote these sonorous stylistic epitaphs? – & all the cleanliness of Iverne village, its happiness & well being, making me ask, as we tended to men, Still this is the right method, surely; & then tea & cream – these I remember: the hot bath: my new leather coat: Shaftesbury, so much lower & less commanding than my imagination: & the drive to Bournemouth, & the dog & the lady behind the rock, & the view of Swanage, & coming home.

And then it was horror: Nelly; faced her going; was firm yet devoted: on Tuesday she sobbed me a the landing said "Please ma'am may I apologize?" & this time we had been so resolute & implicitly believed her that I had written 6 letters. No cooks however came: & I had enough book into the 'Servant question' to be glad to be safe again with Nelly. how I rev

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Come what may, never never to believe her again. "I am too fond of you ever to be happy with anyone else" she said. Talking of complements, this is perhaps the greatest I have had. But my mind is wandering. This is question of clothes. This is what humiliates me — talking of complements — to walk in Regent St. Bond St. &c: & be notably less well dressed than other people.

Yesterday I finished the first part of To the Lighthouse, & today began the second. I cannot make out — here is the most difficult abstract lyrical writing — I have to give an simply human, no people's character, the passage of time, all layers & features, with nothing to cling to: well, I think it, & attempt scatter out two pages. Is it genuine, or is it brilliance? Why am I so flown with words, & apparently free to do exactly what I like? When I read a bit it seems spurted too: needs compressing, but not much else. Compare this during Queenie with the excruciating hard work any pages I had with Mrs Dalloway (see the end) This is not made up: it is the literal fact. Yes, & I am rather famous. For the rest, we dally about the Nahum. Meghan, dined in a light overcoat, is back; hums & haws about standing for the Provost of Kings. We tell him Lydia looked like it. Its ways of meaning middle age & respectability. I feel some sympathy for him. This is because he is young Grey, I tell Elvie. Clive back. Nessa departing. I worrying about my clothes, & how Roger

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Last night upset me by saying that Nina finds fault with my temper behind my back. Then (at Ralph's new left handed establishment) I say, rather like Vivien to look at, searches into my eyes with her greenish pink-rimmed ones, & says, I must tell you two things: then she tells me that she admires me. That overflowed (doubtfully) then says, Did you ever have an affair with Oliver? The connection is this: She disliked me, from jealousy I protest I never kissed him, & he never looked at me. She refuses to believe. So she has been refusing to believe for years – At quiet little interview, stage managed by Oliver* & Ida: at last brought off. I called in Leonard, & I think convinced her.

* Oliver denied all knowledge of this; & said the invented it in order to have an excuse for an intimate conversation

"So many women are like that" said Rose Macaulay sitting upright bean, like a yeomanfeud Cat, in her chair (this is written Aug. 12th)

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Wednesday
5th May?

An exact diary of the Strike would be interesting.
For instance, this now a ¼ to 2: there is a brown fog;
nobody in building; this dangerous. The first thing in
the morning we stand at the window & watch the
traffic in Southampton Row. This is incessant. Everyone is
bicycling: motor cars are loaded up with extra people.
There are no buses. No placards. no newspapers.
The men are at work on the road; water, gas &
electricity are allowed; but at 11 the light was
turned off. I sat in the press in the brown fog,
while L. wrote an article for the Herald. A
very revolutionary looking young man on a cycle
arrived with the Bulletin Gazette. L. is to
answer an article in this. All was military
& a little secret. Then Clive dropped in,
the door being left open. He is offering himself to the
Government. Maynard gated, waits the Ld. to
bring out a Skeleton number of the Nation. This all
& depressing, rather like ~~bee~~ waiting in a
train outside a station. Rumours are spread
around – that the gas wd. be cut off at 1 –
false of course. She does not know what to do.
And nature has laid down thick today – fog,
rain, cold. A voice, rather commonplace &
official, yet the only common voice left, makes us
good morning at 10. This is the voice of
Britain, to wh. we can make no reply.
The voice is very trivial, & only tells us that
the Prime Minister is coming back. that
the London streets present an unprecedented spectacle.

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Thursday
6th May

(one of the curious effects of the strike is that it is difficult to remember the day of the week) Everything is the same. but, unexpectedly, & because of the weather, & habit we are more cheerful, take less notice, & occasionally think of other things. The papers are at today. There are various skeleton papers being sold. One believes nothing. Clive dines in Margaret, & everyone is pro-men: I go to Harrogate, & he shouts me down with "Yes yes yes Lemon Jack, Mr Wooly" & how Thomas has sorrow. Frankie dines out, & finds everyone pro-government. But Hope in a rage. Churchill is for peace, but Baldwin won't budge. Clive says Churchill is for tear gas bombs, fight to the death, & is at the bottom of it all. So we go on, tamely in our cap. I notice how frequently we break off with "well I don't know". According to L. this open strike ground is due to the lack of papers. It feels like a deadlock, on both sides: as if we could keep frozen like this for weeks. What one prays for is God: the king & God: some unpractical prayer today keeps & his friends — as apparently we all desire.

Just back from a walk to the Strand. Afterwards we notice lovely. Full of elderly men & fine Thursday afternoon passengers in the old 3rd class carriages. Children swarm. They pick up bits gold wood paving. Everything seems to be going fast, away in barges. The ships are open but empty. Even St Paul's is some odd pale annealed atmosphere — great actually but no normal life. I think we shall become more independent & stoical as the days go on. Meanwhile I am involved in deep bogey work today: I tremble & shiver all over at the appalling

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magnitude of the task I have undertaken — to go to a dressmaker recommended by Todd, even, she suggested, but here my blood ran cold, with Todd. Perhaps this & etc. are more terrible than the Strike. It is a time like the early hours of the morning (this state of things) when one has been up all night. Business improved to day. We sold a few books. Rob & I cycled from Leith Hill, getting up at 5 a.m. to avoid the crowd. He ventured an hour later, met his tailor who mended hem, set forth again, was almost crushed in the crowd near London, & has gone been tramping London, from Chelsea to Bloomsbury to gather gossip, & talk, incoherently about demands, snags & his own poetry. He has secreted two more of these works which "ought to be published" He is ravenous, greedy, & apeish, but has a kind of rueful merely charm: like a dog one tears. He complained how Logan teased him. Clive calls with dismal bulletins — indeed, more than anything else this is like a house where someone is dangerously ill; a friend drops in to enquire, & one has to wait for doctor's news — Quennel, the poet, came; a lean bag, nervous, plaintive, rather pretty; on the look out for work. Came to tap the Woolves — who are said, I suppose to be an authority on that subject. We suggested Desmond's job. After an hour & a half, he left, as — here Clive came in & interrupted. He has been shopping in the West End with Mary. Nothing to report there. Vx & L. listened in at 7 & heard nothing: The talk of the street — how people "seek to work" that is the stock phrase: that it will be cold & windy to morrow (this is very cold today) that

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There was a warm debate in the Commons —
Among the crowd of tramps in Kingsway were old
Pickhard, toothless, old wispy, benevolent; who
tapped L— on the shoulder & said he was "~~[illegible]~~
tracing to shoot him"; & old Mrs Pickhard,
Especially frail, dusty, tory, shabby. "Stay long
work at last Mr Woolf?" "Four weeks."
"Oh dear!" Off they tramp, over the bridge to
Kennington I think: next in Kingsway comes the
old battered clerk, who has 5 miles to walk.
Mrs Talbot has an hour walk: Mrs Brown 2
hours walk. But they all arrive, &
chatter about as usual — Pickhard doing poor
feeble work for nothing, as I imagine his way is,
& calling himself a Tory. Then we are
fighting the square on the question of leading dogs.
Dogs must be led; but tennis can be played they say.
L: is advancing to the fight, & has enlisted the
~~Power~~ Pekinese in the square. We get no
news from abroad; neither ~~[illegible]~~ can send or
no parcels. Pence have been added to milk,
vegetables &c. And Karen has bought 4
joints.

We new a chilly legless evening; very quiet;
the only sound a distant barrel organ playing.
The bricks stand piled on the building. &
there remain. And Nola was about to make
our fortunes. The Times here, Monday night,
the night of the strike.

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Friday
7th May.

No change. "London calling the British Isles. Good morning Everyone" That is how it begins at 10. The only news that the archbishops are conferring & ask our prayers that they may be guided right. Whether this means action, we know not. We knew nothing. Mrs Cartwright walked from Hampstead. The L. got heated arguing, she being anti-labour; because she does not see why they should be supported, & observes men in the street looking instead of working. Very little work done by either of us today. A cold, wet day, with sunny moments. All arrangements unchanged. Gil came to make chair covers, having walked from Shoreditch, but enjoyed it. Times sent for 25 violin. Question whether to bring out a skeleton Ronco Nabon. Leonard went to the office, I to the Brit Mus; where all were chill serenity, dignity & reverence. Written up are the names of great men; & we all cower like mice nibbling ~~crumb~~ crumbs in our most official discreet impersonal wood beneath. I like this dusty bookish atmosphere. Most of the readers seemed to have rubbed their noses off & written their lives out. Yet they have a life they like — behind in the recesses of making books, I suppose: verifying, collate, make up other books, for ever. It must be 15 years since I read here. I came home & found L. & Hubert arriving from the office — Hubert did what is now called "taking a cup of tea", which means an hour & a half talk about the strike. There is his prediction: if this settled, or in process, on Monday, it will last 3 weeks. Today no wages are paid. Leonard said he minded this more than the war. Hubert told us how he had travelled in Germany, & what brutes they were in 1912. Mrs Banks gas & electricity will go next: had been at a journalists meeting where all were against labour (against the general strike that is) & for assumed government victory. L. says of the strike wing & smarter T.U.s he will devote his life to labour: if the Archbishop succeeds, he will be baptised. Have to dine at the Commerces to meet Clive

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9th May.

There is no news of the strike. The trained Centre has just said that men are praying to day. And L-x & I quarrelled last night. I detest the sub-Chamber in them; he the conservative strain in me. I will write it all out later — my feelings about the strike; but I am now waiting to test my theory that there is consolation in expression. Authentically, I refused yesterday to lunch with the Phil Bakers, who fetched L- in their car. Suddenly, 10 minutes ago, I began to regret this profoundly. Here I should love the talk, & leaving the house, & battling my wits against theirs: now the sensible thing to do is to provide some pleasure to balance this, which I cd. not have had, if I had gone. I am only thank quieting this, & going round the square. Obviously, I have my clothes complex to deal with. When I am asked out my first thought is, but I have no clothes to go in. Todd has never sent me the address of the shop; & I may have annoyed her by refusing to lunch with her. But the Virtuous who refuses is a very instinctive & therefore powerful person. The reflective & rational only comes to the surface later. Then the conflict. Baldwin broadcast last night: he rolls his ~~r~~ rs; tries to put more than mortal strength into his words. "Have faith in me. You elected me 18 months ago. ~~Ha~~ What have I done to forfeit your confidence? Can you not trust me to see justice done between man & man?" Impressive enough to hear the very voice of the prime minister, Defender of Pitt & Chatham, still I can't heat up my reverence to the right notch. I picture the stalwart offended man, bearing the world on his shoulders. And suddenly his self assertiveness becomes a little ridiculous. He becomes megalomaniac. No I don't trust him: I don't trust any human being, however loud they bellow & roll their rs.

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Monday
10 May

Quarrel with L. settled in Studies. Oh, but how incessant the arrangements & interruptions are! As I write, L. is telephoning to Hubert. We are getting up a petition. There was a Debtors Draw (we thought) last night. The Arch B. & Grey both conciliatory. So we went to bed hoping. Today ostensibly the same deadlock; beneath the surface all sorts of currents, which we get the most contradictory reports. Dear old Rankei has a story (over the fire in the bookshop) of an interview between Asquith & Reading which turned Reading hatefully to the men. Later, through Alec, through Desmond, Asquith is proved to be altogether, to men from Lord Reading. Lady Wimborne gave a party - brought Thomas & Baldwin together. Meeting mysteriously called off today. Otherwise strike w. have been settled. Yet the Commons this morning with L's which to serve as stuffing for Hughes dallies in the Commons this afternoon. All this humbug of police & martial statues vaguely displeasing. But the Govt. provided me with boys both ways, & no stones thrown. Silver & Crimson guard at Whitehall; the cenotaph, & men bare heading themselves. Home to find Tom Marshall chatting with L: after lunch to bookshop, where the gossip (too secret for the telephone) was imparted, to Laura Library, where Gooch - a fair, pale male, affable & long winded was seen, & Molly daintily diligently reading her Dublin Review for 1840, walk home: Clive, to refute gossip: James to get Hope to sign; then Maynard urging up to command us to present the Nation as the L. Statesman is presented: to us. I agreed, & L. disagreed; then Dinner: a motor car collision - more telephones pouring at the moment 9.5.

Tuesday
11th
May
from 12.30
to 3

I may as well continue to work – this book is used to scandalous mistreatment – which I want & here interruptions began which lasted till the present moment, when I went with Gerald Brenan in the study composing with infinite difficulty a letter to Mrs Galsworthy. Arguing about the Abp of Canterbury with Jack Squire at 12 seems now normal, but nor-mal often do I repeat – nearly as startling as writing to the Lighthouse or about de G. I believe it's false psychology to think that in after years these details will be interesting. The war is now barren sand after all: But one never knows: & wading about writing letters to literate people from the feet & stick of these unnamable details. Squire doesn't want to "knuckle under!" To kneel is the duty of the Church. The Church has no connection with the nation. Events are that the Gorseo workers repeat Lord Ll's article in the Nation, in which he says that the strike is not illegal or unconstitutional. Presumably this is a little clutch of the Government throttle. Mr Baldwin has been visiting the Zoo. In the middle of lunch admirable Mrs Bailey arrives, having visited Conway Macaulay. Lady Sackville St Loe has joined. So Rose Macaulay & Lytton. Tonight the names are to be handed in; & then perhaps silence will descend upon us. Ralph & Gerald are our encyclopaedia. But then everyone rings up – the most unlikely people – Brace for mutana, Kahan, the woman Comes with the new Sofa Cover. Yesterday Ralph & Fanny Marshall were in a railway accident. She had her teeth jagged. One man was killed, another had his leg broken – the result of driving a train without signals, by the efforts of ardent optimistic undergraduates. Billing has been in to say he will prevent anything, all his men being back

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& reading work. So, as poor Macdermott has been dead since January, perhaps the Nation will be done by them. Come to think of it, almost all our type is standing, so our printing was in any case hardly feasible. Must I now ring up James? Day's Library boy was interfered by roughs, had his cycle overturned, but kept his books, & was centuri[illegible] after calling here for 6 Tree. Tree dribbled along. There is an occasional order. Mrs C. arrives on faithless bicycle which is red with rust.

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Wednesday
May 12th

Strike settled. (Jimmy at bell)

The Strike was settled about 1.15 – or thereabouts was their broadcast. I was in Tottenham Court Rd. at 1 & heard Bartholomew & Hitchin megaphone declaim that the T.U.C. leaders were at Downing Street & came home to find that mother & Nelly had heard this: 5 minutes later, the wireless they took us to stand by & await important news then a piano played a tune. Then the solemn broadcaster announcing incredible pomp & gloom & speaking one word to the minute read out. Message from 10 Downing Street. ~~The Strike~~ ~~has~~ The T.U.C. leaders have agreed that Strike shall be withdrawn. Instantly L. dashed off to telephone to the office, then Nelly to tell Richards Chris., & I & I to Mr. C. (But he was interrupted) then we sensational lunch: then I say cy, chaps – who proposes that we should have a drink tonight.

I saw this morning 5 or 6 armoured cars slowly going along Oxford Street: on each two soldiers sat in their helmets, & one stood with his hand at the gun which was pointed straight ahead ready to fire. But I also noticed one one a ~~fine~~ policeman making a cigarette. Such sights I dare say I shall never see again; & don't on the least wish to. Already (this was to put two) men have appeared at the hotel with claimpikes. Also Gyppy has won his case against the Square.

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Wednesday
May 12th

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~~Lay~~ Thursday May 13th

I suppose all pages devoted to the Strike will be skipped, when I read over the book. Oh that dull old ~~pas~~ chapter. What day. Excitements about what are called real things are always unutterably transitory. Yet this morning – & I – is gloomy, & so am I unintelligibly – today because the Strike continues – no railwaymen back: industrialness has been dazed on matters Government shilly-shallies. Apparently, the T.U. agreed to terms wh. the miners now reject. Trains should take a week to get the machinery of England to run again. Trains are dotted about all over England. Labour, it seems clear, will be effectually divided again, & perhaps will get power to ~~[illegible]~~ make strikes in future. Pickets still out at the stations. In short, the strain removed, we all fall out & bicker & back-bite. That is human nature – & really I don't like human nature unless all candied over with cert.

We dined with a Strike party last night & went back to Clives. A good deal was said about art there. Good dull Janet Vaughan, very nudging me & Emma, joined us. I went to my dress-maker, Miss Brooke, & found the most quiet & friendly ~~Sec~~ even enjoyable of proceedings. I have a great lust for lovely stuffs. & shapes: wh. I have not gratified since Jolly Young died. A bold move then, but now I'm free of the fret of clothes, which is worth paying for. & need not parade my good sheet.

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Thursday
May
20th

Waiting for L. to come back from chess with Roger: 11.25.
I think nothing need be said of the strike. It tends to happen,
one's mind slips after the crisis, & what the settlement is, or will be,
I know not.

We shall must now fan the brooks up again. Nora &
Phil Baker were both struck on the wing. Nora comes, very
tactfully, as a friend, she says, to consult after dinner.
She is a flamboyant creature — much of an actress — much
abroad, like the Waleys & Marjoribanks: but rather taking to me.
She has the great egotism, the magnification of self, which
any bodily display, I think, produces. The Waley women
lift their skirts a ankle, like horses. Easily reverts to the
other one charm: how the third has married the D. of
Rutland. Lord — (her uncle) told me Jowett the woman
John really loved. The duchess said to me "Do make love to
John & get him away from ... At any rate you're
tall & beautiful — And I sometimes think I'd married
him — but he never asked me — Daddy wouldn't have died
I'd have prevented that operation: Then how he'd have loved
a duke for a son in law! Ah his life was drawing up —
that sort of thing you know." So she goes on, in the best of
clothes, easy & familiar, but reserved too: with the
coils & warrenness of a woman of the world, half sordid
half splendid, not quite at her ease with us, yet glad of
a room where she can talk her stories, of which she is
rich & strange. She will run on by the hour — yet is very
watchful not to bore: a good-natured woman, a flattering
over considerable acuteness on her charms. All this
however, is not making her book move, as they say.

Eddy came in to tea. I like him — his flattery?
his notoriety? I don't know — I find him easy & easier — And

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Vita comes to lunch tomorrow, which will be a great amusement & pleasure. I am amused at my relations with her: left so abrupt in January — & now what? Also I like her presence & her beauty. Am I in love with her? But what is love? Her being 'in love' (it must be comma'd thus) with me, & letters & flatters; & interests. What is this 'love'? — Oh! then the flatters my eternal curiosity: who's the man, what's the done — for I have no enormous opinion of her poetry. Then comes I — I who have such a delight in indicating the works even of my greatest friends. I should have been sending her poems to-night: instead finished Sharon Turner — a pretty, simple, old man: the very spirit & image of Saxon. a hoarder too, I dare say, with the most intense zeal for "improving myself", & the holiest affections, a 13 children, no character or ambitious — a love of long walks, of music; modest, yet conceited in an ant-like way. I mean he has the industry & perseverance in accounting compliments of an art but do little character that one hardly calls being vain!

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Monday
May
25th

The heat has come, bringing with it the inseparably
disagreeable memories of parties, & George Duckworth: a fear
haunts me even now, as I drive past Park Lane on top of a
bus, & think of Lady Arthur Russell & so on. I become
hot & sore with everything: but fall into tone as the bus reaches
Holborn. A curious transition that, from dependency to
freedom. Mixed with it is the usual "I thought that when you
died last May, Charles, there had died along with you" —
death being hidden among the roses: & Nessa's birthday
among the little red pink rosettes of the May, which we
used to stick on the pavement at the top of Pk. Gate
& I asked why. Nothing more, it did not come out on the 1st;
it comes out now, Nessa's birthday, which must be the
47th is in a few days. She is in Italy: Duncan is
said to have "committed a nuisance" for which
he has been fined 10 lira.

L. has been having belly-poisoning cold,
brought by Lottie — do I hear him? Gerald says yes:
Vanny had wagging — She is right. Vita has it, or
I showed he during — how we have been sitting in the
Square. L. is better. I am happier. Tomorrow we go to
Rodmell — to find the bath & the W.C. & the drawing room
with the wall pulled down. This cheery hen-brood
& workdiaries do show that I do scarcely believe we shall
now march. And I must notice that the strike shall
make it necessary for me to send out trains at
Victoria.

I have finished — sketchily I admit — the 2nd part of
To the Lighthouse — & may, then, have a draft written over
by the end of July. A record — 7 months, if
it so turns out.

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So Vita came: & I recalled the shock of meeting after absence; how they one is: how disillusioned by the actual body; how sensitive to new shades of tone: something 'womanly' I detected, more mature: & she was shabbier, come straight off on her travelling clothes; & not so beautiful, as sometimes perhaps: & so we sat talking on the sofa by the window, the talk silent. I chattering, partly to divert her attention from me; & to prevent her thinking "well, is this all?" as she was bound to think, having declared heavily so slowly in waiting: so that we each recovered some disillusionment: & perhaps also acquired some grains of additional solidity — this may well be more lasting than the first ebullition. But I compared her state, partly, to a flock of birds flying hither thither scared, confused: returning, after a long journey, to the middle of things again. The way queer, shyer, awkwarder than equal even. She has no ready talk — confronted by Nelly or Mrs. Cartwright she stands like a schoolgirl. I think it quite likely she will get Harold out of her job. But then, as I always feel, with her 'grand life', Dollies & so on, whom I don't know at all, ~~the~~ there may be many parts of her perfectly unillumined. But I cannot write. For the most part I can write. Suddenly the word instinct bears me. There is the permanent state of most people no doubt. Imagine meet George & Lady M. at the Darwins. He is a humbug & she a fiend he writes. The new walks with a stick. What a dreary word this — there bubbly meeting once in 20 years & so.

NYPL

Wed.
9th
June

Then I got the blue, last Saturday; sat shivering at Lord's, in the hot sunshine: so have seen no one, except Basement dwellers, a hint off Mrs Georgiana; Wednesday & Hope tonight, & Osberts dinner tomorrow. Ah my bubbling up faculty abroad leave me. I spend an a letter of that eternal Hen to read, lecture, an the Yale Review has brought it, & cannot conceive what the lighthouse is all about. I hope to whip my brain up either at Vita's or Rodmell this week end

Yes, Rodmell is a perfect triumph, I consider — but L advises me not to say so. In particular, our large combined drawing eating room, with its 5 windows, its beams down the middle, & flowers & leaves nodding in all round us. The bath boils quickly; the water does gush & surge (not quite sufficiently high). The weather again failed us, & we had a queer journey home, via Newhaven Peacehaven & Brighton. Trains slow & scarce. The Strike. Thursday, continues. We then went to a party at Edith Sitwells (I in my new dress) 'Honest Miss Stein' a lady much like Joan Fry, but more massive, in blue-sprinkled brocade, rather formidable. There was Morgan, Siegfried, Todd — to whom I proposed, wildly fantastically, a book — what she accepts! — (& Viola so much enchanted in the Austere Knight of Ham Spray) & Edith — distraught; & cherries in handfuls, & barley water — an L. described it very brilliantly to Sybil the next day. The Cave: no one else: we sat & laughed — & where the honey in this Wasphidesh. Kindly, rather annoying woman, I asked Z. Then she expressed a wish to dine with us. L is lunching with Wells today.

NYPL

Wednesday
9th

Leonard back from Wells who chattered till ¼ to 4: like to walk through the streets: has a house in France kept for him by a very intelligent Brazilian lady. Called me "too intelligent — a bad thing": can't criticize: brings in social theories, because he says in an age when poverty is disappearing, the social state is part of the character. They lunched at Boulogne: Leonard asked for him at the Automobile Club: "A very famous name" said the man. And the warmth & clamour of Wells' fame seems to reach me, this chilly rainy evening: & I see how, if I stayed there, as he asks us, he would overwhelm me. (We are very hungry, by the way: Nelly is preparing a nice roast chicken & ices for dinner: which I shall enjoy. Then we shall play the Gramophone. I'm clearing up after my attack I'm glad to say, though a little undecided whether to stay with Vita or go to Monks House.

Le. is going to make a book of his essays. I think of asking Lady Horner to write her memoirs. Today we discussed the date of Nelly's holiday — & so we go on.

NYPL

June 30th

This is the last day of June & finds me in black despair because Clive laughed at my new hat, Vita pitied me, & I sank to the depths of gloom - This happened at Clive's last night after going to the Strawbs with Vita. Oh dear I was wearing the hat without thinking whether it was good or bad, & it was all very flashing & cosy; & there I saw a man with beaded hair, another with long red tongues in his button hole; & suddenly Vita & laughed & chattered. When we got out it was only 10.30 = a cold starry night: I had refused to go to Coleridge: it was still too early for her to go. So she said "Shall we go to Clive & pick him up?" & I was then again so light hearted driving through the park, & seeing people pass dead before us. Also we saw all the Mayfair houses, & finally came to Jordan Lodge. & there was Nena tripping along in the dark, in her giant black hat. So we had some lively talk - The said Duncan was having a sandwich at the public house: then he came, carrying an egg. Come on all go to Clive, I said: & they agreed. Well, it was after they had come & we were all sitting round talking that Clive suddenly raced, & barked rather, "What an astonishing hat you're wearing!" Then he asked where I got it. I pretended a mystery. Tried to change the talk, was not allowed & they pulled me down between them, as like a hare: when I never felt more humiliated, Clive said Did Mary choose it? No. Todd said Vita. And the dress? Todd of course: after that I was forced to go on as if nothing terrible had happened; but it was very forced & queer & humiliating. So I talked & laughed too much. Duncan funny & acid as ever

HYPU

told me it was utterly impossible to do anything with a hat like that. And I joked about the Squires party.
& Learnt yet silent. & I came away deeply chagrined, as unhappy as I have been these ten years; & revolved it in sleep. Dreams all night; & today has been ruined

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1st July.

Where reflections about the hat seed rather amazingly I think. Whatever (for I was acutely unhappy & humiliated) these gypsy-ideas interest me, curiously as I am of a strong hysteric pin controlling them - Leonard in short. Coming out from lunching with Meynard today I ran (in the hat, in the dress) into Clive & Mary, & had to stand their fire: dress praised to the skies; hat passed. So that's over - indeed the cloud began to lift at 7 last night.

But all this has obscured Gasquin: Bridges: & Wells. These great men are so much like the rest you. Wells remarkable only for a combination of stockishness with acuity: he has a sharp nose, & the cheeks & jowl of a butcher. He likes, I judge, rambling & romancing about the lives of other people; he romanced about the Webbs: said their body were splendid eggs, well & truly laid, but addled. Described Bentwich, as a ~~gypsy boy~~ boy a gypsy & a Jew: a flashing creature, become Quaker as we all do as we get on. That has nothing to do with ~~God~~. Are you a Quaker, I asked. Of course I am. She believes that there is a reason for things (I think he said) But he did not sit steadily off the ground for long. Lunch in a hot stodgy room too. I loved Lee from the platform watching Webb: I saw (she has widely spaced teeth & in repose looks very worried, at the same time vacant) that he is arrogant & bullying in private life. ~~His~~ The virtues he likes are courage & vitality. I said how ghastly! (That is the story of

Certainly I ~~asked~~

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Dorothy Richardson's Struggles) NB: nothing is ghastly where there is courage he said. He rambled over her life, amazingly. How she married Edel, a man who makes symbolical drawings — babbles coming out of a human mouth & turning into woman's legs & so on: which is so like life, Wells said: the heterogeneity — one thing leading to another, & the design so remarkable. But they don't sell. And now Duckworth won't publish anymore of her books.

As for Bridges: he strangely from a rhododendron bush, a very lean tall old man, with a curly grey hat, & a reddish ravaged face, smoky fierce eyes, with a hazy look in them; ~~& so~~ very active: rather hoarse, talking incessantly. We sat in his open room & looked past blue spikes of flowers to hills, which were invisible, but when they show, ah this goes out he said — his one practical saying, a saying that struck me as such — We talked about handwriting, & criticism; how Garnett had written on Keats: & they know a Petrarchan sonnet, but not why one allows it. Because they don't write sonnets, I suggested & urged him to write criticism. He is direct & spry, very quick in all his movements, taking me down the garden to look at flinks, then into his library, where he showed me the French critics, then said Michelet was his favourite historian, then I asked to see the Hopkins manuscripts: a fat rocking at them with that gigantic grasshopper shoulders folded up in a chair close by. Ottoline undulated & vegetated.

Tavistock Cafe!

1 Irma
2 Roger
3 Julia
4 Dadie
5 Eddie
6 V.
7 Clive
8 Raymond
9 Lytton

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He asked me to come again: would send me his poems — nothing
Early ones which want a beautiful voice, & aren't
interesting he said: but his later ones, his hexameters.
He skipped off & held the gate open. I said how much I
liked his poems — true of the short ones: but was manfully
pleased & flattered to find him so obliging & easy &
interested. Ottoline flattered me on this point. But
she has her points too: her drawling charm reveals
them, as we sat by the lake discussing Mary Olive life
truth literature. Then friend, & Mdme — Eddie &
Philip Nichols, & Mrs Spender Clay, who can have
£300 a year if she wants it Julian said.

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Sunday
4th July

Then Wells came again: & stayed till 4, when he had to meet an American. He is getting to the drowsy stage: the body seems well wishing but not so spry as he used to be. He talked about his new book. The thoughts one has at 60. He brings in Weininger — a man called Lubin, for instance, who invented int. Agriculture (I think) a man who died in poverty & was ~~thereby~~ shuffled out of the way to his grave in Rome the day that Wilson made his entry. "That shallow, pretentious empty headed professor" — Lubin was the real thinker for Italy. What other ideas had he? Desmond asked. Well, to do away with ~~week~~ Sunday. There should be only holiday one in 10 days. That was his own first 10 days work then 4 & 5 days off. The present system is wasteful. The shadow of the week end begins on Friday, is not over till Monday afternoon. He said sometimes he worked all day for days: sometimes not at all. He struck me again as an odd mixture of ~~[illegible]~~ bubble & solidity — like to blow a phrase new & then. We got being onto Hardy — a very simple, subtle old peasant man much impressed by clever people who were very humble. Delighted when Wells took Rebecca West to call on him, walked half way with Dorchester with them — "an impudent young fourcalint" Wells called her. Hardy had heard of her. Came to stay with Barrie to see an air raid — wrote his early books in chapters as the Senates wanted them. Then he got up to go: we asked him to stay & tell us about Henry James. So he sat down. Oh! should he

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delighted today & talk the whole afternoon he said. Henry James was a formalist. He always thought of clothes. He was never intimate with anyone — not with his brother even: had never been in one. Then his brother wanted to see Chesterton, & climbed a ladder & looked over a wall. This angered Henry: who called in Wells & asked him for an opinion — an ass had one! Wells has learnt nothing from Proust — his book like the British Museum. One knows there are delightful interesting things in it, but one does not go there. One day it may be wet. — What shall I do, God, what am I to do this afternoon? — I shall read Proust as I might go to the British Museum. Would not read Richardson — a man who knows all about feminine psychology with some contempt nobody ought to know that. Said on the contrary he knew very little: was conventional. Honour chastity & so on. Wells said we had changed our ideas completely. That idea of chastity had vanished. Women were even more susceptible than men. Now they don't think about it — a chaste little couple (he talks of little couples) meeting with a promiscuous little couple. He said we are happier perhaps — Children are certainly more at ease with their parents. But he thought they were beginning to miss restraints. They were wondering what things were for. They were very restless: declaring Henry James & Eliot, & how formal they are & overdone with manner — he described this. Peering under a letter he was writing to talk to Wells "at the Reform" ~~he said~~ I said I was American. They were when I was Confederate. He said he

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had been that humely. His father was a gardener his mother a ladies maid. He found it very strange to meet people who went to parties & wore dress clothes. Henry James could not describe ~~the~~ love — ~~the~~ there comes the ahh — laying in of hands. This Nelle could do humely. I am a journalist. I prude myself when being a journalist he said — Well there a part of feeling that all writing should be journalism — [done with an object] She knows nothing of what posterity will want — maybe a guide book. I felt ashamed they will read him for his topography. In all this he showed humely. a — Des mend said afterwards, perfectly content to be humely, aware of his powers. — aware that he need not take any trouble, since his powers were big enough.

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July 22nd

The summer boarders are now my cast-iron, & rather handily. Many nights I wake in a shudder thinking of some atrocity I have done. I bring home the minute punctilio which magnifies in the muddle of the night into gaping wounds. However, I drove my pen through de Quincey yesterday morning, having put the Lighthouse aside till Rodmell. There all virtue, all good, is in retreat. Here nothing but odds & ends — going to the dentist, buying combs; having Maynard & Abbot to tea & then Ralph & Frances to dinner, followed by Eddie in kitchen. But we are both jaded, & get no clear impression any more from the human face — must dine with Abbot yet well tonight though, & go to Hardy tomorrow. This is human life: this is the infinitely precious stuff unrolled in a narrow roll to us now, & then withdrawn for ever; & we spend it thus. Days, without definite sensation are the worst — yah. Days when one compelles oneself to undergo this or that for some reason — but what reason?

There is nothing important at the moment to record: or if so, & one's state of mind is overwhelmingly important, I leave that, too, for Rodmell. There I shall come to grips with the last part of that python, my book: it's a hug & a struggle. — I wonder now & then, why I let myself in for it. Rose Macaulay said "what she would do with one's thoughts?" I have not seen her again nor Gwen, nor written to Violet; nor least French. nor finished Clarissa.

Desmond came in; talked about Shakespeare. Now to tell my mind to Jessica —

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July 25th

At first I thought it was Hardy, & it was the parlourmaid, a small
thin girl, wearing a proper cap. She came in with silver cake stands &
in. Mrs Hardy talked to us about her dog. Shall they bring
enough in to tea? Can Mr Hardy walk much as I asked,
making conversation, as I knew one would have to. She has
the large sad black lustre eyes of a children's woman; great
docility & readiness, as if she had learnt her part; not
great alacrity, but resignation in welcoming more visitors;
wears a sprigged voile dress, black shoes, & a necklace. ~~[illegible]~~
We can't go far now, she said, though we do walk every day
because our dog is still able to walk far. He bites, she told us.
She became more natural & animated about the dog, who
is evidently the real centre of her thoughts — then the maid
came in. Then again the door opened, more sprucely, & in
rolled a little pushy checked cheerful old man, with an
atmosphere ~~rather~~ cheerful & businesslike in addressing us,
rather like an old doctor or solicitor, saying "Well now —"
or words like that as he shook hands. He was dressed in
rough grey with a striped tie. His nose has a point not,
& the ~~to~~ end curves down. A round whitish face, the
eyes now faded & rather watery, but the whole effect cheerful &
vigorous. We taken a three cornered chair (I am too
jaded when all this coming & going to do more than
gather facts) at a round table, where there were the
cake stands & so on; a chocolate roll: what is called a
good tea: but we only drank one cup. Sitting in this
three cornered chair. He was extremely affable & aware of his
duties. He did not let the talk stop or drag in making talk.
He talked of father. Said he had seen me, & might have
been my father but he thought it was me, in my
cradle. He had been to Hyde Park Place — oh fancy was it.
A very great street. That was why my father liked it. Odd
to think that in all these years he had never been

NYPL

down there again: He went there often. Your father took my novel — Far From the Madding Crowd — We stood shoulder to shoulder against the British public about certain matters dealt with in that novel — You may have heard. Then he said how some other novel had fallen through that was to appear — the parcel had been lost coming from France — not a very likely thing to happen, as your father said — a big parcel of manuscript; & he asked me to send my story. I think he broke all the Cornhill laws — not to see the whole book: so I sent him Chaplin by chapter. & was never late. Wonderful what youth is! I never had a moving head doubtless, but I never thought twice about it — It came out every month. Then all they were nervous, because of Mr Thackeray & then. The said the became paralysed & could not write a word directly he heard the press begin. I daresay I was bad for Novel to appear like that. One begins to think what is good for the magazine, not what is good for the novel.

You think what makes a strong woman, but in Mr. Hardy jocularly — She was leaning upon the tea table, not eating gazing out.

Then we talked about manuscripts. Mrs Smith had found the MS. of F. from the M.C. in a drawer during the war & sold it for the Red Cross. Now he has his MS back, & the printer inks cut all the marks. But he wishes they would leave them, as they prove it genuine.

He puts his head down like some old hunter begins. He has a very long head; & puzzled bright eyes. for in talk they grow bright. He said when he was in the Strand 6 years ago he dearly knew where he was, & he used to know it all intimately. He told us that he used to buy 2nd hand books — nothing valuable — in Wych Street. Then he wondered why Great James Street should be so narrow & Bedford Row so broad.

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he had often wondered about that. At this rate, London would soon be unrecognizable. But I shall never go there again. Mrs. Hardy tried to persuade him that it was an easy drive – only 6 hours or so. I asked if she liked it, & she said Granville Barker had told her that when she was in the nursing home she had 'the time of her life'. She knew everyone in Dorchester, but she thought there were more interesting people in London. Had I often been to Siegfried's flat? I said no. Then she asked about Eric Morgan, said he was a clever, as if they expected praise from him. I said I heard from Wells that Mr. Hardy had been up to London to see an act said. "What they say," he said. It was my wife. "There was an act said one night when we stepped into Baggie. We just had a little hope in the distance – the lights were very beautiful. I thought of a bomb now were to fall on this place would be lost. And he smiled that had rather worried a little: asked in a queer way, which is peak & yet solacing. Indeed, there was no trace to my thinking of this shrewd. Indeed, he seemed perfectly aware of everything. simple peasant. He seemed perfectly aware of everything. in no doubt or perturbation; having made up his mind; & having delivered gave his work, so that he was in no doubt about that either. He was not interested much in his novels, or in anybodies novels: took to talk easily. naturally. "I never took long with them" he said. The longest was the Dinnaots (so pronounced) But that was really 3 books" said Mr. Hardy. yes: & that took me 6 years; but not working all the time. Can you write fearly regularly.) asked (being heart with the desire to hear him say something about his books: but the dog kept cropping up. How he got: how the inspector came at; how he was ill: & they could do nothing for him. Wonder you

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mend it ~~for~~ to him in ². asked Mrs. Hardy & in came Wesey,
a very travelled, rough brown & white mongrel. Got to spend the
house, so naturally he bite hostle, said Mrs H.
Well I dont know about that, said Hardy, perfectly natural, &
not seeing much shock by his poems either it seemed.
Did you write poems at the same time as you novels, I asked?
No. he said. I wrote a great many poems. ~~that~~ I
used to send them about, but they were always returned
he chuckled. And in those days I believed in editors.
many were lost – all the fair copies were lost. But I
found the rolls, & I wrote them from those. I was
always finding them. I found one the other day: but
I don't think I shall find any more.
Siegfried took room near here, & said he was going to work
very hard, but he left soon.
Mr. Edm. Forster takes a long time to produce anything – 7 years,
he chuckled. All this made a great impression of the
Ease with which he did things. – I dare say F. from Mr. Mel.
would have been a great deal better if Hard would it
differently he said – But as it it could not be helped, –
did not matter.
We used to go to the Lunchrooms in Kensington High St. & saw my
mother there. She used to come in & sit when I was
talking to your father.
I wanted him to say one word about his waiting before we left & cd
only say ~~but~~ ask abt. his books he wd have chosen, if he had to
he had had to choose one to read in the train. I had taken
the M. of C. That being dramatised, but as Mrs. H.
& then ~~book~~ voyage L. L. Honeu

And did it hold your interest? he asked
I stammered that I would not stop reading it – which was
true, but sounded wrong. Anyhow, he was

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not going to be drawn, & went off about giving a young lady a wedding present. None of my books are fitted to be wedding presents he said. ~~All~~ You must give Mr. Wolf one of your books, said Mrs. Hardy, inevitably. Yes I think. But I'm afraid only with little then perhaps editions he said. I pretended that it would be enough if he wrote his name (this was vaguely uncomfortable.)

Then there was de la Mare. His last book of stories seemed to them such a thing. Hardy had liked some of his poems very much. People said he must be a finicky man to write such stories. But he is ~~most~~ very nice man — a very nice man indeed.

He said to a friend who begged him not to give up poetry "I'm afraid poetry is giving up me." The truth is he is a very kind man, & sees ~~the~~ anyone who wants to see him. He has 10 people to tea the day sometimes.

Do you think one can write poetry if one sees people? I asked "One might be able to — I don't see why not. It's a question of physical strength" said Hardy. But clearly he preferred solitude ~~for~~ humility. Always however he said something sensible & sincere; & then made the obvious human compliment giving rather unpleasant. He seemed to ~~think~~ be free yet ah; very active minded; liking to discuss people; not talk in an abstract way: for example ~~Lt~~ Col. Lawrence, bicycling with a broken arm "held like that" from Lincoln to Hardy listened at the door; to hear where were anyone there.

I hope he won't commit suicide, said Mr. Hardy pensively. Still having over the tea

NYPL

cups, gazing dependently. He often says things like it, though he
can never said just that perhaps. But he has blue lines
round his eyes. He calls himself Shaw in the army.
No one is to know where he is. But not put into the papers.
He promised me ~~to give up flying~~ - not to go into the air, said
Hardy.

My husband doesn't like anything to do with the air,
said Mrs. Hardy.

Now we began to look at the grandfather's clock in the corner.
We said we must go - tried to infer we were only down
for the day. I forgot to say that he offered a
whisky & soda, wh. struck me that he was competent in a
host & in every way.

So we got up & rejoined Mrs. Hi rather hotly; & Hardy took my
& Lilla's coats off, & trotted back with it rejoined,
woolly shell wolff, wh. I dare say had given him some
anguish. Then Wesley came in again. I asked if Hardy
Coned Stoke him. So he went down & stoked him,
like the waiter of the home. Wesley went on
wheezing away.

There was not a trace anywhere of deference to education, or
respect for rank, or extreme simplicity. What impressed
me was his freedom, ease, & vitality. He seemed very
"great Victorian" doing the whole thing with a sweep of his
hand (they are ordinary small hands) &
setting no great store by literature; but immensely
interested in facts; in science; & somehow, one could
imagine, naturally sweep off into imagining
& creating without a thought quite being difficult or
remarkable: becoming absorbed; & living in imagination.
Mr. Hardy threw his old grey hat into his hand
& he trotted us out on to the road. Where is
that? I asked him, pointing to a clump of trees

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in the down opposite, for his house is outside the town, with open country (rolling, massive Downs, crowned with little free coronets before & behind) & he said, with interest "That's Weymouth. We see the lights at night – not the lights themselves, but the reflection of them." And so we left, & he trotted in again.

Also I asked him if I might see the picture of Tess which Morgan had described, an old picture: whereupon he led me to a careful exposing of Tess coming out a room from a picture by Herkomer. "That was rather my idea of her" he said. But I said I had been told he had an old picture. "That's gotten" he said "I used to see people now & then with a look of her."

Also Mr. Hardy said to me, "Do you know aldous Huxley?" I said I did. They had been reading his book, which they thought 'very clever'. But Hardy could not remember N. said his wife had talked to him – his eyes were now so bad. "Now the book whose theme" They've changed everything now he said. We used to think there was a beginning & a middle & an end. We believed in the Aristotelian theory. Now one of these stories came to an end with a woman going out of the room." But he no longer read novels.

He chuckled.

The whole thing – literature, novels &c – all seemed to him an amusement, far away too, scarcely to be taken seriously. Yet he had sympathy & hope for those still engaged in it. But what his doubts inherent in it. But what his doubts are – to what occupation he trotted off when we left him – I do not know.

Small boys wait to him from New Zealand, & have to be answered. They bring out a Hardy number & open Japanese paper, which he produced. Talked too about Blunden. I think Mr. H. keeps him hoisted in the young & the younger sorts

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Rodmell. 1926

As I am not going to milk my brains for a week, I shall have write the first pages of the greatest book in the world. This is what the book would be if that was made entirely solely & with integrity of one's thoughts. Suppose one could catch them before they became "works of art."? Catch them hot & sudden as they rise in the mind – walking up Asheham hill for instance. Of course one cannot; for the process of language is slow & deluding. One must stop to find a word, then, there is the form of the sentence, soliciting one to fill it. What I thought was this: if art is based on thought. what is the transmuting process? I was telling myself the story of our visit to the Hardys. & I began to compose it: that is to say to dwell on Mrs Hardy leaning on the table, looking out, apathetically, vaguely; & so would soon bring everything into harmony with that as the dominant theme. But the actual event was different.

Art & Thought.

Next, looking by living people.

I scarcely ever read it. but, owing to his giving me the books, am now reading C by Mr Boring. I ~~think~~ am surprised to find it as good as this. But how good is it? Easy to say this is a great book. But what quality does it lack? That it adds nothing to one's vision of life. perhaps. Yet it is hard to find a serious flaw. Why wonder is that entirely second rate work like this, poured out in profusion by at least 20 people

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generally, I suppose, has so much merit. Never reading it, I get into the way of thinking it men-existent. In this, speaking with the utmost strictness that it will not exist in 2020: but it has some existence now, which haggles me a little. And Clarissa bores me; yet I feel this is important. And why?

My own Brain

Here is a whole nervous breakdown in miniature. We came on Tuesday. I sank into a chair, could scarcely rise: everything insipid, tasteless, colourless. Enormous desire for rest. Wednesday — only wish to be alone in the open air. Air delicious — avoided speech: could not read. Thought of my own power growing with veneration, as of something incredible, belonging to some one else; never again to be engaged by me. Mend a blank. Slept in my chair. Thursday. No pleasure in life whatsoever; but felt perhaps more attuned to existence. Character & idiosyncracy as Virginia Woolf completely sunk out. Humble & modest. Difficulty in thinking what to day. Read automatically, like a cow chewing cud. Kept in chair. Friday. Sense of physical tiredness: but slight activity of the brain. Beginning to take notice. Making one or two plans. No power of phrase making. Difficulty in waiting to Lady Colefax. Saturday (today) much clearer & lighter. Thought I could write; but resisted, or found it impossible. A desire to read poetry set in — Friday. This brings back a sense of my own individuality. Read some Dante & Blake, without troubling to understand, but got pleasure from them. Now I begin to work to work notes, but not yet novel. But today senses quickening. No 'making up' power yet: no desire to cast scenes in my book. Curiously about literature returning: want to read Dante, Havelock Ellis, & Berlioz autobiography: also to make a working plan with shelf frame. These processes have sometimes been spread over several weeks.

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Proportions Changed.

Next in the evening, on an Columbian day, the proportions of the landscape change suddenly. I saw people playing croquet on the meadow: they appeared sunk far down on a flat board; & the downs raised high up, & mountainous round them. detail was smoothed out. This was an extremely beautiful effect: the colours of the women's dresses also showing very brightly in the almost untinted surroundings. I knew, also that the proportions were abnormal — as if I were looking between my legs.

Second Rate Art.

L.E.C. by Maurice Barnes: Within its limits, it is not second rate, or there is nothing markedly so, at first go off. The limits are the proof of its non-existence. It can only do one thing: namely to wit: Charming, clean, modest Sensitive Englishman: Outside that radius, it does not carry far no Olympic much, ah is — as it should be: kept, pure, proportioned, affecting even; loved in a well bred manner that nothing is exaggerated. all related, proportioned. Would read this for ever. I said. I said one would soon be sick to death of it.

Wandervögel

of the sparrow tribe. Two resolute, sunburnt, dusty girls, in jerseys & short skirts, with packs on their backs, City clerks, or secretaries, ~~march~~ tramping along the road in the hot sunshine at Rye. My instinct at once throws up a screen, which confuses them: I think them in every way angular, awkward & self assertive. But all this is a great mistake. These screens that we set. Have no screens, & ~~one gets at the~~ for screens are made out of your own integument; & get at the thing itself, which has nothing whatever in common with a screen. The screen making

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habit, though, is so universal, that probably it preserves our sanity. If we had not this device for shutting people off from our sympathies, we might, perhaps, denote utterly separateness would be intolerable. But the sources are in the eyes; not the sympathy.

Returning Health.

This is shown by the power to make images: the reflective power of every sight & word is enormously increased. Shakespeare must have had this to an extent which makes his normal state the state of a person blind, deaf, dumb, stone-stockish & fish-blooded. And I have it compared with poor Mrs Bartholomew almost to the extent that she has it compared with me.

Bank Holiday.

Very fat woman, girl & man spend Bank Holiday — a day of complete sun & satisfaction — looking up family graves in the churchyard. 23 young men & women spend it tramping along with ugly black boxes on shoulders & arms, taking photographs. Man says to woman "~~In~~ Some of these great villages don't seem to know it's bank holiday at all" in a tone of superiority & slight contempt.

The Married Relation

Arnold Bennett says that the horror of marriage lies in its 'darkness'! All alertness & relationship is rubbed away by this. The state is more like this life — say 4 days out of 7 — becomes automatic; but on the 5th day a bead of vexation (between husband & wife) forms ~~on~~ on it. ~~The~~ is all the fuller & more sensitive because of the automatic customary unconscious days on either side. That is to say the year is marked by moments of great intensity. Hardy's 'moments of vision'! How can a relationship endure for any length of time except under these conditions?

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3rd Sept

Women in tea garden at Bramber – a sweltering hot day: rose trellises: white washed tables: lower middle classes: motor ~~omnibuses~~ omnibuses constantly passing: bits of grey stone scattered on a paler stretch green sward all that's left of the Castle.

Woman leaning over the table, taking command of the heat, attended by two elder women, whom she pays for. The girl waitress (a marmalade coloured fat girl, with a body like the softest lard, detained from to marry, but at least only 16 or so)

"What can we have for tea?"

Woman (very bored, arms akimbo) Cakes, bread & butter, tea:

Girl

" Jam?

Woman: Has the wasps been troublesome? They get into the jam – as if they suspected the jam would not be worth having.

Girl agrees.

Woman: Ah, wasps have been very ~~fa~~ prominent this year

Girl That's right.

So she doesn't have jam.

This amused me. I suppose.

For the rest, Charleston, Tilton, To the Lighthouse. Etc.

Expedition: the summer dominated by a feeling of ~~the~~ washing in boundless warm fresh air – such as I've not come my way for years: bicycling: no settled work done, but considerable taken of air for going to the seven or over the downs. The novel is

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on the lawn

here rarely within sight of the end, but this, mysteriously, comes no nearer. I am doing Lily: but whether it's her last lap, I don't know. Nor am I sure of the quality: the only certainty seems to be that after tapping my antennae in the air rapidly for an hour every morning I generally write with heat & ease till 12·30: & thus do my two pages.

5th Sept.

To work has done, written over that is, in 3 weeks, I forecast, from today. What emerges? At this moment I'm casting about for an end. The problem is how to bring Lily, Mr R. together & make a combination & contrast at the end. I am feathering about with various ideas. It ~~was~~ the last chapter which I began tomorrow is In the Boat: I had meant to end with R. climbing onto the rock. Who, what becomes of Lily & her picture? Should there be a final page about her & Carmichael looking at the picture & summing up R.'s character? In that case I love the interval that moment. If this intervenes between R. & the lighthouse, there's too much chop & change, I think. Could I do it in a parenthesis? To that one had the same grounding the two things at the same time?

I think she is somehow. I suppose. Then I want to go to the question of quality. I think it may run too fast & free, & be rather thin: on the other hand, I think it is subtler & more human than JR & Mrs D. And I am encouraged by my own abundance as I write. It is

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proved, I think, that what I have to say is to be said in this manner.
As usual, side issues are sprouting in great variety as I
wend thru up: a book of characters; the whole thing being
hatched out from some single sentence, like Clara Paten,
"Don't you find that Barkers sins have no points to them?"
I think I can turn out all their entrails this way: but this
hopelessly undramatic. This all in ratio obliquus.
Not quite all, for I have a few direct sentences.
The lyric poems & the d. are collected in the 10 year
Capsule, & don't interfere with the text so much as usual.
I feel as yet fetched its circle pretty completely this time: &
I don't feel sure what the stock criticism will be.
Sentimental? Victorian?
Then I must begin to plan out my book on literature for the
Press. Dr Chapline. Why not groups of ideas,
under some single heading – for example.
~~Art~~ Symbolism. God. Nature. Plot. Dialogue.
Take a novel & see what the component parts are.
Separate them, & bring under them instances of all
the books which display them biggest. Probably
this would pass out historically. One could then a
theory which would bring the chapters together. I don't
feel that I can read sonorously & gaudily for it.
Rather I want to work out all the ideas that have
accumulated in me.
Then I want to write a bunch of 'Outlines' to
make money (for a under a new arrangement, we're
to share any money over £200 that I make): this I must

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leave rather to chance, according to what books come my way.
I am frightfully contented these last few days, by the way.
I don't quite understand it. Perhaps Vera has something to do with it.
Charlotte & Julian knocked me off my perch for a moment:
Nina & her children: Reginald & his carpets. My own gifts
& shares seemed so moderate in comparison. My own fault too —
a little more self control, ~~was~~ on my part, & we might
have had a boy of 12, a girl of 10: This always makes me
wretched in the early hours. So I said, I am spoiling
what I have. And thereupon settled to exploit my own
possessions to the full: I can make money & buy
carpets: I can increase the pleasure of life enormously by
doing it carefully. No doubt, this is a rationalisation
of a state which is not really of that nature. Probably
I am very lucky. Mrs Allinger says she would like to look like me.
Nancy says I'm the only woman she loves. Nelly cooks
admirably. Then, I am extremely happy walking on
the Downs. I don't want to be talking to Eddy at
Charleston. I'd like to have Shaw to spread my mind out in:
what ever I think. Vera sap out, suddenly & I. We
are somehow very detached, free, harmonious. I don't
in the least want to hurry up & finish the time here.
I want to go to Seaford & walk back over the Downs:
to go & see the house at East Chiltington: to
breathe in more light & air: to see more grey bottom &
good cornfields & the first ploughed land shining
white, with the gulls flickering. No: I
don't want anyone to come here & interrupt. I am
immensely busy. Hence I come to my moral,
which is simply to enjoy what one does enjoy, without
teasing merely on but Nina has children, Reginald
carpets. I might go & stay with Ethel. For

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my own. Wishes are always definite enough to give me a lead, one way or another: & the chief joy in life is to follow these lights; ~~to~~ I am now almost entirely surrounded by sheep. God knows, I wish we could buy the terrace, & have a garden all round the lodge — but this is not a serious dimension of joy.

Clive & Mary came over yesterday in brilliant sun. We sat on the millstones. (one sheep has a tail like a bell-rope — the others are all bit short). Wells. Hardy. Maynard. Richardson. Hones. ~~Cla~~ Christabel. Journey to Greece for a month with Lesley Jowitt. Maupassant's Metaphors. The Questionnaire. Lytton's harem. Shaw's dulness. Carrington a cook who doesn't go out on Sundays. Whether Eddy is clever or not. Tenks & Steer & Moore. Tonks in love with Mary, Clive insists: she is modest. So we talked. Then I drove with them to the Lake, walked up the down behind the farm & let all that wind & sun blow through me. Crazy Jack going old windmill, which gives me so much pleasure still. I forget what I thought about: did not think. I suppose: was all in a thrill of emotion — at my being liked by Mary, being a success. Home to music, my new 15/. Talk, talk, talk &: a sense of silent happiness & ease. Went & looked at the stars, but could not get quite the right ~~to~~ sense of amazement (I can get this really well at times) because L said "has come in. It's too cold to be out"

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Home to nurse, my view 15/. talk: talk with L:
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because L said "he's come in. Its too cold to be out"

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Sunday
13th Sept.

The blessed thing is coming to an. I say to myself with a groan.
It's like some prolonged rather painful, yet exciting process of nature, which
one desires inexpressibly to have over. Oh the relief of waking —
thinking it done — the relief, the disappointment, I suppose.
I am taking it to the Lighthouse. I am exacerbated by the fact
that I spent a deuce last week hammering out Dr Quimby,
which has been lying about since June: to expect £30 to
write on Willa Cather: & now shall be just in a week I
hope of this unbearable fiction, & could have wedged in
Willa before going back. So I should have had £70 my
yearly 200 ready made by October: (my speed is immense: I want
to have £50 my own in the Bank to buy Persian Carpets,
pots, chairs &c:) Curse Richmond, Curse the lemon,
Curse my own procrastination & nerves. Mark Ds
Cobden Sanderson, Mrs Hepburn & make something by them however
as for the book — Morgan said he felt 'this is a failure'
as he finished the passage to India. I feel — what?
A little stale this last week or two from steady working.
But also a little triumphant. If my feeling is correct,
this is the greatest sketch I've put my method to, —
I think it holds. Boy this I mean that I have been
dredging up more feeling & character. I imagine. But
Lord knows, what I look at my haul. This is only my
own feeling in process. God how I'm haunted by that
damned criticism of Janet Case "its all dressing"
technique (Mrs Dalloway) The C.R. has substance
But then we are strained taut. any fly has liberty to
settle. & its always the good fly. Mine praising me
intelligently has comparatively little power to
encourage — when I'm working that's — when the
idea halts. And this last lap, in the boat, is hard,

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because the material is not so rich as it was work lately on the lawn: I am forced to be more direct & more intense. I am making some use of symbolism, I observe; & I go in dread of 'tenth mentality'. Is the whole theme open to that charge? But I doubt that any theme is entirely good or bad. It gives a chance to the peculiar faculties — that's all. Then I'm concerned whether to stay work till Ethel Sands is out: whether to buy a dress or not. Then I'm astonishingly happy in the country — a state of mind which, if I did not dislike hyphens, I should hyphen, to show that it is a state by itself. We took Angus over the downs towards Falmer yesterday. After all these years, we have discovered some of the loveliest, loneliest, most surprising Downland in these parts: loveliest I think than ever rival the Seaford-Telton down over which we walked in blowing sun last Thursday. How it beat on our heads, made poor puffing pant!

Lydia & Maynard came to tea.

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15th Sept

Sometimes I shall use the Note form: for instance, this

A State of Mind

Woke up perhaps at 3. Oh it's beginning to come — the horror — physically like a painful wave swelling about the heart — tossing me up. I'm unhappy unhappy! Down — God, I wish I were dead. Pause. But why am I feeling this? Let me watch the wave rise. I watch. Vanessa. Children. Failure. Yes: I detect that. Failure failure. (The wave rises) Oh they laughed at my taste in Green paint. I wave Crashes. I wish I were dead! I've only a few years to live hope. I can't face this horror any more — (This is the wave spreading out over me.

This goes on; several times, with varieties of horror. Then, at the crisis, instead of the pain remaining intense, it becomes rather vague. I doze. I wake with a start. The wave again! The overwhelmed pain: the sense of failure; generally some specific incident, as for example my taste in green paint, or buying a new dress, or asking Wardie for the week end, tacked on.

At last I say, watching as dispassionately as I can, I now take a peep of yourself. No more of this. I reason. I take a census of happy people & unhappy. I brace myself to throw to batter down. I begin to march blindly forward. I feel obstacles go down. I say it doesn't matter. Nothing matters. I become rigid & straight. & sleep again, & half wake & feel the wave beginning & watch the legat whitening & wonder how, this time, breakfast & daylight will overcome it; & then hear L. in the passage & simulate, for myself as well as for him, great cheerfulness: & generally am cheerful, by the time breakfast is over. Does every one go through this state? Why have I so little control? This not creditable, nor bearable. It is the cause of much waste & pain in my life.

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Sept 25th

Every day I have meant to record a state of mind. But it has always disappeared (characteristically) yet recurred often enough to make it one of some importance. It is running hard this evening: we have entered the Calcy period of Nelly's departure. So I will try, before my fingers chill & my mind wanders to the fire, to write here what I can remember.

Intense depression: I have to confess that this has overcome me several times since September 6th (I think that, or thereabouts, was the date.) It is so strange to me that I cannot get at reason — the depression, I mean, which does not come from something definite, but from nothing: "where there is nothing" the phrase came back to me, as I sat at the table in the drawing room. Of course I was interrupted; & discovered that, for the first time for many years, I had been idle without being ill. We had been walking, expeditioning, in the hot June weather. I was writing the last pages of To the Lighthouse (finished, practically, Sept 16th) somehow, my reading had lapsed. I was wanting no novels. One night I got hold of Geoffrey Scott's book on Architecture, & a little spark of motive power awoke in me. This is a warning then: never to leave the use of the brain. So I used my brain. Then, owing to mismanagement, no one came to stay, & I got very few letters; & the high pure hot days went on & on: & this blankness persisted, & I began to suspect my book of the same thing: & there was Nessa humming & booming over the hill; & one night we had a long long argument. Vita started it, by coming

TYPE

over with Flark & L (I say) spoilt the visit by glooming
because I said he had been angry. He shut up, & was
caustic. He denied this. But admitted that my habits
of describing him, & others, had this effect often. I saw
myopy, my brilliancy, fluency, charm, beauty &c &c — his
attendants who float me through so many years)
demeanour & disappear. She is in fact rather an
elderly dowdy fussy ugly incompetent woman.
vain, chattering & futile. I saw this vividly,
impressively. Then he said our relations had not been so
Good lately. On analysing my state of mind I
admitted that I had been irritated, post by the
prevalency of the dogs (Guzzle a heat too.)
Blandly by his assumption that we can afford
to saddle ourselves with a whole time gardener
build or buy him a cottage, & take on the terrace to
be garden. Then, I said, we shall be tying ourselves to
come here: shall never travel; & it will be
assumed that Monks House is the hub of the world
This it certainly is not, I said, to me: nor do I
wish to spend such a measure of our money on
gardens, when we cannot buy rugs, beds, or
good arm chairs. L was. I think, hard at this,
& I was annoyed at saying it, yet did it, not
angrily, but in the interests of freedom. Too many
women give way on this point, & secretly grudge
their unselfishness in silence — a bad atmosphere.
Our atmosphere decidedly cleared, after this,
Tommie came for the week end, & I am once
more full of work, at high pressure, interested, &

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quite unable, I see, to make plain even to my own eyes, my sense of profound dependency.

If I wish to avoid this in future, I recommend, first, incessant brain activity; reading & planning; second, a methodical system of inviting people here (which is possible, with Nelly obedient & gay) third, ~~a~~ increased mobility. For next year, I shall arrange perhaps to go definitely to Ethel Sand - With my motor I shall be more mobile.

But this always a question whether I wish to ~~be~~ avoid these glooms. In part they are the result of getting away by myself, & have a psychological interest what the usual state of working & enjoying lasts. There 9 weeks give one a plunge into deep waters: which is a little alarming, but full of interest. All the rest of the year one is (I daresay rightly) curbing & controlling this odd immeasurable soul. When it expands, though one is frightened & bored & glooming, this is a way to myself, awfully juicy. ~~Pen~~

~~Edge~~ There is an edge to it which I feel of great importance, one in a way. One goes down into the well & nothing protects one from the assault of truth. Down there I cant write or read: I just hover. I am. Then I ask myself what I am? & get a clearer though less flattering answer than I should in the surface — to have, to tell the truth, I get more praise than is right. But the praise will go: one will be left alone with this queer being in old age. ~~It~~ I am glad to find it an one above to interest me. Though so acutely unintelligent. Also, I can, by taking pains, be much more considerate of Li feelings, & so keep more steadily at our ordinary level of intimacy & ease: a level, I think, no other couple so long married reaches, & keeps so constantly.

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I wished to add some remarks to this, on the mystical sense of this solitude: how this not one self but something in the universe that has left work. It is this that is frightening & exciting in the midst of my profound gloom, depression, boredom, what even it is. The face sees a fin passing far out. What image can I reach to convey what I mean? Really there is none I think. The interesting thing is that in all my feeling & thinking these never come up against this before. Life is, soberly & accurately, the oddest affair: has in it the sense of reality. I used to feel this as a child — Could I keep across a bridge one I remember, for thinking, how strange — what am I? &c. But by working I don't reach anything. All I mean to make is a note of a curious state of mind. I hazard the guess that it may be the impulse behind another book. At present my mind is totally blank & virgin of books* I want to watch & see how the idea at first occurs. I want to free my own process.

Pebbles
The Waves
or notes
(Oct. 1929)

I was depressed again to-day because Vita did not come (yet relieved at the same time): had to hold Li's ladder in the garden, when I wanted to write or to try on Nena's dress: & slightly afraid that this dress is not very successful.

But I am shelving the dress problem on these principles. I am having cheap day clothes: & a good dress from Brooke: & I am being less perniciously about keeping to limits, as I have only to write & the money, to make, I wager, quite £50

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Extra in the year for my own Extravagances. No longer shall I let a Coat for £3 floor me in the middle of the night, or be afraid to launch out because "I've no clothes."
A broader & bolder grasp is what is wanted. Here I am going into the question of order & so on, like a housekeeper, ~~for~~ taking in Muffles. Soon, that time next week, I shall have no time for flourishing or introspection. It will be "When may I come & see you?" Already Betty Potter has begun.

Now I must scheme a little at my book of Criticism.

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Saturday.
30th Oct.

Would be when may I come & see you! – two true a prophecy, though made in the damp & solitude of Rodmell. Monday, Oggie Wickinson, Wednesday, Lady Colefax, Thursday Morgan & Mrs Abel Chevalley, dine Wells to meet Arnold Bennett, Friday to Monday Lowy Bam. So the week slips or sticks through my fingers: rage misery joy, dulness elation mix: I am the usual battlefield of emotion: alternately think of buying chairs & clothes: plod with some method revising. To the Lighthouse; quarrel with Nelly (who was to catch the afternoon train today because I told a lie about a telephone) & so we go on. Maurice Barring & the Strachey read his books: Leonard forges ahead, now doing what he calls "Correspondence"; the Rees creaks a little at its hinges: Mrs C. has absconded with my spectacles: I find Buggles boxes: like the normal male; & should now be developing my book for the Rees. Ah there they shoulder each other out across the screen of my brain. At intervals I begin to think (I note this, as I am going to watch for the advent of a book) of a solitary woman making a book of ~~ed~~ clear about life. This has intruded only one or twice, & very vaguely: this a dramatisation of my mood at Rodmell. This to be an endeavour at something negative & spiritual: the thing that goes when we aren't there

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many external things, we were at Lambridge for the week end;
kept away at the Bull — & there's a good subject — The Hotel.
Many people from Macclesfield talking about motor cars.
Mothers, time pathetic, looking hard thrifty at their sons,
as if deprecating their age. A whole life spread time:
father, mother, son, daughter. Father alone has wine.
An enormous man, like an advertisement of Power:
sits in chair. Daddy, you'll be miserable unless you say
God, heavy, morose. Mother a mere wisp; sits with
eyes shut; had spent hours drying up working
Character of maids. Yeah I remember any of them?
Then Gosse introducing Vita at Lagal — something
I never saw the whole hierarchy of lit. so
placidly exposed. Gosse the ornament on the tea pot:
beneath him pile on pile of old stout widows
whose husbands had been professors, feeble
Melchisedeks, doubtless, monotonous dons; &
these good people, remembering tea, & rejecting
all the depths of the suburbs tinctured with "The Hollow
Literature, dear Vita told them were
men." Her address was read in sad sulky
tones like those of a schoolboy; her pendulous
rich foundry face, glowing out under a black hat
at the end of the smoky dismal room, looked
very ancestral & like a picture ~~fall~~ under glass in a
gallery. She was followed when by the letter
gaffer-grocer Gosse, who kept spinning round on
his heel to address her compliments & to
learedly Bolshevists; in an ironical
voice which seemed ~~afraid of what~~ to
to ward off what might be said going; &

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be drawing round the lot of them thicker & thicker, the red plush curtains of respectability. There was Vita, who was too innocent to see it, Gwedalla, & Drinkwater.
I dont regret my violent, foolishness, utterance, if it gave the last crack to this respectability. But needless to say, no word of mine has had any effect whatever. Gone will survive us all. How have does he do it? Yet he seemed to me, with his crying & his scraping, somehow uneasy. A kind of black doormat got up & appeared to be Lady Gone. So home, with Dotty in a rage, because she was palmed off with Hank. She did contrive to get here though in the end. One night I went in with Vita after the play. She was lying asleep at Mount Street, in a flat at the top of the house: large pale furniture about dimly seen — a dog on her bed. She woke up chattering & hysterical. Virginia Woolf Virginia Woolf, my God! Virginia Woolf in the room. For God Sake, Vita dont turn the light on. No light you fool! But I cant see to get the allella, mumbled Vita. The dotted though. Lie down & drink. Dinky shapes of flame & things, a room that never seen; a woman I "scarcely knew; Vita there between us, intimate" both; flattery, extravagance, complete inner composure on my part, & so home.

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23rd Tuesday Nov.

Here I must resolve first of all to find some long solid book to read. What? Tristram Shandy? French memoirs? This is on top of a discussion, after tea, about Angus. He don't do, L. says: will never make a manager. So then shall we be another attempt, or Cape, or Lecher? These difficulties recur. I shouldn't much like waiting for Cape; yet if the Ress is sagging on our shoulders, there is little sense in waiting on. Next year L. thinks we could sell to advantage. It gives me a full life: but then life is so full already. Colefax complicates the scene — Colefax is the deal of this book. Still I always reading her scrawls or answering them. She culminates last week in her dining alone with me, off cold chicken. I found her talking socially, not intimately, the in pearls (thank Victor Rys) popping up one light after another: like the switch board at the telephone exchange at the mention of names. Geoffrey Scott, Percy Lubbock whoever it might be. Perfectly competent, &, for her purpose, efficient. She is, I maintain, a woman of the world: has all her senses turned to that hutch. The machine doesn't work in private, though she was very amiable, never aspersing, slightly suspicious & uneasy woman, that it should. She told me how she had lived till the married running after old ladies with their knitting. So, on marriage but she was only 19, had kicked her heels up: determined to live, like Kokets mother, who leant out of the Palace window at Auckland &

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said, to an old man telling happiness, Is this life? But now,
aged 50, she asks, Is this life? again – seeking
around, dining & giving dinners; never able to concentrate in
a corner, & secretly, in my opinion, not desiring it
but pretending it, as she has the habit of presence.
This is all right in her, but wrong in me. So
we don't altogether amalgamate; but I have
my reservations, she has. In came Wardie,
over relay somewhat: then Sir Arthur,
breezy, cheery, competent, patting her, controlling
her, petted by her (she reverted to her arch girlish
days, when she could eat soup & potatoes without
any thought of her figure) settling on the edge of my
shabby dirty down at heels arm chair.
All this makes an abacus. Fame grows. Chances of meeting
this person, doing that thing, accumulate. Life is
as I've said since I was 10, awfully interesting – if
anything, quicker, keener at 44 than 24 – more
desperate I suppose, as the river shoots to Niagara –
my new vision of death: active, positive, like all
the rest, exciting: a great importance – an
experience.

'The one experience I shall never describe'
I said to Vita yesterday. She was sitting on the
floor in her velvet jacket & red striped silk shirt,
knotting her beads into heaps of great lustrous
eggs. She had come up to see me – so we
go on – a spirited, credulous affair,
think, innocent (spiritually) & all gain,
I think: rather a bore for Leonard, but not
enough to worry him. The thing is one has

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room for a good many relationships. Then the goes back again to Persia with Leigh Hunt – that pretty faced low voiced rather beaten cur, who is always thinking off with his tail between his legs. but fever, they say, oyster suppers.

I am doing six pages of Lighthouse daily. This is not I think, so stuck as Mrs D: but then I find much yet very sketchy, & have to improvise on the type writer. This I find much easier than re-writing in pen & ink. My present opinion is that this family the best of my books. fuller than J & R. & less spasmodic occupied with more interesting things than Mrs D. & not complicated with all that desperate accompaniment of madness. This fever & fuddle I think. Yet I have no idea yet of any other to follow it: which may mean that I have made my method perfect, & it will now very like this, & serve whatever use I wish to put it to. Before, some development of the method brought fresh subjects in view, because I saw the chance of being able to say them. Yet I am now & then haunted by some semi mystic very profound life & meaning, which shall be told on one occasion; & time shall be utterly obliterated; future shall somehow blossom out of past. One incident – say the fall of a flower – might contain it. My theory being that the actual event practically does not exist – nor time either. But I dont want to force this. I must make up my series book

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Dec
~~ber~~; 11th Sat.

I have never been able to afford 2/ for a good piece of washleather, yet I buy a dozen boxes of matches for 1/6.

I am giving up the hope of being well dressed.

Violet Dickinson has just had a third serious operation & I went to an old lunatic shop instead of going to see her.

Leonard is lunching with Maynard, & a great registered parcel has just been delivered containing Wedie's dissertation.

Shops now close on 3.30.

Some superstition prevents me from reading Yeats' autobiography as I should like.

I am very happy at the moment: having arranged my week on the whole well. But I have been rather unsociable. I have to put off the Stephens, at Thorpe: & shall probably stay at home.

A few thoughts to fill up time waiting for dinner
An article all about London:
how Vita's mother flowered on her table.
Logan's raving: I write everything of times -
(so that how it drove I thought: he thought
that the only way to produce writing like mine)
But all my thoughts perish instantly. I make
them up so vast. How to blent the sting of
an unpleasant remark: to say over & over
again. Walked to Violet: took her a red
carnation & a white one. My feelings quickened as
I drew near. I visualized the operation as I
stood on the doorstep.
I also have made up a passage for the Lighthouse:
on people going away & the effect on one's
feeling for them.
But reading Keats turns my sentences one way:
reading Sterne turns them another.

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Friday.
Jan
14th
1927

This is out of order, but I have no new book, & so must record here (& then I here I recorded the beginning of this Lighthouse) must record from the end - This moment I have finished the final drudgery. This now completes for Leonard to read on Monday. This I have done it some days under the year, & feel thankful to be out of it again. Since October 25th I have been revising & retyping (some parts 3 times over) & no doubt what I should work at it again: but I cannot.
I feel is that it is a hard muscular book, which at this age proves that I have something in me. It has not run out & gone flabby, at least such is my feeling before reading it over.

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Sunday
Jan. 23rd

To the Lighthouse

Well Leonard has read it, & says this much my best book. & this a 'masterpiece'. He said this without my asking. I came back from Knole & sat without asking him: He calls it entirely new 'a psychological poem', is his name for it. An improvement upon Mrs Dalloway: more interesting. Having won this great step, my mind dismisses the whole thing as usual: & I forget it, & shall only wake up & be worried again over proofs & then when it appears.

We went to Cornwall (dare I characterise Will having long talk next door – this Sunday – he is staying with us) He is a warm blooded warpaint Celtic man, all on edge, vain, peevish, nervous: Ka is maternally, but substantial. Some view I retain – one of the valley in the evening light – but other were only a dark impression of life suspended & frozen, & the chin sawing of Mercyn: all chafed, recalled. We came home for these reasons a day early, & next morning I had a letter from the New Coast H. & T. asking me to go there, pledge paid, 120 in my pocket &, behalf, expenses, & write 4 articles. We accepted, on conditions: but have not heard yet. Meanwhile we hesitate, for it seems came, we should probably be £150 out of pocket. So it seems. The adventure is tempting. But the prospect of many months is scarcely to be endured unnecessarily. We could go to Greece, or Italy for less.

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then Nessa has gone, poor dear creature – I came in two days ago & found her white at the telephone; Elly at the other end saying that Dorlanis illness was probably typhoid. I think a left handed marriage makes these moments more devastating: a sense remains, I think, of hiding one's agonies; of insecurity. Angus wrote the most cautious alarming letter. Anyhow she went yesterday in a snowstorm, & we kissed on the pavement in the snow. We are very intimate – a great solace to me. Vita goes on Saturday. Tomorrow I dine with her at Colefaxes: a brilliant party: no clothes: hair down my back as usual. Does it very much matter? I reached that point of philosophy at Knole the other night, with the beautiful mournfully Mrs Rubens & his Lordship the figure of an English nobleman decayed, disgusted, smoothed, effete; respectable I think in his modest way. But I never have enjoyed a party. Balls at Buckingham Palace are worth looking at. We spend the day sitting on Cowles at Macdonne: interviews persons about lifts: like Chez & Crème. Vita took me over the 4 acres of building. What the loser: too little Carlyle beauty for my taste: smaller rooms looking into buildings: no view: yet one or two things remain: Vita walking in her Turkish dress, attended by small boys, down the gallery, waving them on like some tall stately ships – a sort of Corsey of noble English life: dogs wallopping, children crowding, all very fine & stately: a

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Cart bringing wood in to be sawn by the great circular saw.
How do you see that? I asked him. He said he saw it as something that had gone on for hundreds of years.
They had brought wood in from the Park to replenish the
Great fires like this for centuries: & her ancestors had
worked to or the saw with them that days
pounding by them. All the centuries seemed
lit up, the past expressive, articulate; not dumb -
forgotten: but a crowd of people stood behind, not
dead at all: not unpaintable; fair faced, long limbed;
affable: & so we reach the days of Elizabeth quite
easily. After tea, looking for letters of Wordsworth to
show me, she tumbled out a love letter of Ld.
Dorsets (17th Century) with a lock of his soft gold tinted
hair. which I held in my hand a moment. The
hair had a sense of life fished up into the light which are
usually submerged. There were no particular age or
any great sense of difference or distinction. They are
not a brilliant race. The race & Cornelian of it
all struck me. Came home to Marjorie Strachey
Tom Eliot Nessa & Roger. A letter contrasted
our country: no talk of the clergy or of the
Country: but how lively & agile compared with the
rest

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